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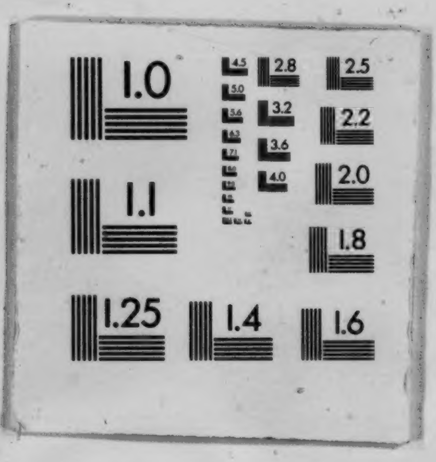
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Full Name of Author – Nom complet de l'auteur
Shelley Maureen Quinn

Date of Birth – Date de naissance
January 28, 1955

Canadian Citizen – Citoyen canadien
☑ Yes / Oui ☐ No / Non

Country of Birth – Lieu de naissance
CANADA

Permanent Address – Résidence fixe
60A MacLellan Street
Antigonish, N.S.
B2G 2P2

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Dr. Stephen Arnold

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S. A. Arnold
Supervisor

P. L. Knight

Albert M. Fereador

E. D. Blodgett

Emile Snyder
External Examiner

Date December 3, 1984

Abstract

Surrealism, one of the most perplexing movements in twentieth century art and literature, is best known for its exhaltation of the bizarre. Largely because the imagery has been so difficult to classify, critical inquiry has often concentrated on the more comprehensible similarities between André Breton's and Sigmund Freud's ideas, focusing the majority of their attention on the problematic concept of the unconscious. Unfortunately, psychoanalytic and psychological studies have resulted in an impasse in critical studies in definitional terms. Therefore, the major goal of this enterprise is to attempt a de-psychoanalysis of criticism pertaining to surrealist imagery. The focus of the study is on the different modes of perception associated with the two hemispheres of the human brain and the possible implications of these modes for differentiating imagenic processes involved in the creation of poetic imagery. The analysis draws heavily from recent discoveries and hypotheses in the fields of neurology, neuro-psychology, and psycholinguistics, comparing the validity of Breton's original suppositions attributable to an "unconscious" with neurological facts about the abilities of the right hemisphere.

The historical survey from Romanticism to Surrealism analyzes representative imagery, while postulating links between hemispheric dominance and image types with regard to both creative and receptive processes. This historical

approach leads to the conclusion that while ideally the surreal image reflects the perceptual modalities of the poet's right hemisphere and encourages increased right hemisphere activity in the reader, this usually "mute" brain has also played a substantial role in the creation of much traditional imagery. In essence, the degree to which either the poet's or the reader's right hemisphere succeeds in blocking the left hemisphere's tendency to demand conformity in perception and expression determines "surreality" in imagery.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my friend and advisor Dr. Stephen Arnold who offered continuing encouragement and sensitive criticism throughout the writing of this disseration. I want to express my gratitude to Dr. E.D. Blodgett for his guidance, particularily in the area of language modalities; to Dr. A. Forcadas whose willingness to teach Catalan opened the door to a unique and fascinating literature; to Dr. P. Knight for the countless hours he spent sharing his enviable knowledge of French poetry; and to Professor P.A. Robberecht who, many years ago, first told me about the rewards to be found in the study of Comparative Literature.

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I. Surreal Imagery and the Right Brain

The history of imagery involves two basic mental processes: visual thought and verbal thought. Readings in speculative anthropology and psychology suggest that throughout history these two processes have vied for supremacy. In the early stages of homo sapiens' development, dreams, fantasies, and visions, which are associated most strongly with visualization, were valued more than cognitive perception and thought, which are usually associated with and expressed through language. The most prevalent view of informed contemporary speculations on the origins of language contends that initially language was based on images, and words functioned to evoke particular images which allowed people to exchange experiences.[1] However, as knowledge and communication developed, rational thought came to dominate. Words no longer evoked such powerful, or such immediate images. Indeed, many words no longer triggered the original sensations. Instead, they allowed the speaker to distance himself from his own experiences. They became tools the prime function of which was to facilitate the categorization and dispersion of facts.[2]

Literary scholar Thomas Williams notes that "To name a thing is to lead away from the unique reality at hand, the living presence, and into the more familiar field of concepts and definitions by which we normally order our thoughts and reduce our perceptions to their most common and useful denominators."[3] J. Schuster draws attention to a negative aspect in the eyes of many twentieth century literati and philosophers when he comments that "le langage actuel bloque la pensée en ce sens qu'il se diversifie, se spécialise jusqu'à devenir jargon qui divisent [sic] les hommes et divisent [sic] la pensée."[4] Robert Bréchon also mentions language's potential for restricting thought, and in his discussion writes that "la logique borne le champ de la pensée, elle bloque son fonctionnement."[5]

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[1] Mike and Nancy Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye (New York: Random House, 1975), p. 13.

[2] Mike and Nancy Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye, pp. 11-17.

The belief of some twentieth century poets that there must be a greater reality than the rational one expressed through established language systems, combined with a desire to break through the abstractions, to rediscover the importance of visualization, has led them to try to investigate this "other" reality, using imagery as the ship to carry them on their mission of discovery. However, this is a most difficult voyage:

> From the very beginning of the act of writing, the poet is struggling to redeem, by some magic, the natural opacity of and impurity of language. The first black mark on the white page is a movement away from that vision which constitutes the poet's essential "letter to the world." From this initial admission of failure--failure insofar as he has not

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[3] Thomas A. Williams, Mallarmé and the Language of Mysticism (Georgia: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1970), p. 37.

[4] J. Schuster quoted by Gérard Durozoi in Le Surréalisme (Paris: Larousse, 1972), p. 88.

[5] Robert Bréchon, Le Surréalisme (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1971), p. 57.

> been able to utter the perfect Verbe--the poet must go on to spin out of himself some pattern of sound, image and rhythm, some analogy which will serve as the objective embodiment of his subjective conviction. He must embody the truth that he cannot rationally "explain." He must utter the unutterable.‘

Surrealism's pre-eminence in twentieth century irrational literature owes much of its success to its insistence on and exhaltation of bizarre, imagery, much of which was derived from "recorded dreams," "automatic writing," and the cultivation of delusional or trance-like states. The practitioners of Surrealism assigned the "surreal" image the role of privileged vehicle for bringing forth into the conscious mind the creative forces of the unconscious. They sought to revolutionize poetic language, and through this revolution to extend man's knowledge of reality into an absolute reality or a surreality. The core of surreal concentration, as well as that of literary historians and critics trying to explain the mechanics and significance of Surrealism, is the image. Unfortunately, the generally acknowledged leader--cum dictator--of the French surrealists, André Breton, while acknowledging the importance of the image, never satisfactorily defined its characteristics. Even though imagery is central to Surrealism, and an understanding of it is crucial to comprehension of the movement, the vast majority of studies tend to avoid direct confrontation with the surreal image, electing to deal with it in indirect generalizations or not

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‘Williams, p. 36.

at all. Thus, despite the volumes that have been dedicated to examining Surrealism, there was and is, in definitional terms, an impasse in the study of this literature.

Surrealism is one of the most confusing and misunderstood movements in twentieth century art, its original goals lost amid a critical clutter. This is not simply because of its radical nature:

> Good poetry has always been a conscious or unconscious reaction against the common places of the previous era; and a full appreciation of any poet's originality will depend on a knowledge of what has preceded him in terms of traditional poetic vocabulary, favoured expression and consecrated image.[7]

Instead, a partial explanation for the lack of clarity in surreal criticism lies in the shortage of direct textual studies. Breton's *Manifestes du surréalisme*[8] are a mixed blessing, for more attention has been paid to these theoretical or apologetic works than to the creative texts produced within the movement. The result has been a profusion of historical, theoretical studies[9]--valuable in their own right--accompanied by numerous philosophical, theoretical ones.[10] However, very few have been produced which are concerned with actual textual analysis which attempts to find the distinctive characteristics of surreal imagery--characteristics which must exist if Surrealism is indeed a separate movement.[11] Most literary criticism is nothing more than a paraphrase of the Manifestos. With this method of criticism the only basis upon which one can analyze surreal images is theoretical documentation, and this usually results merely in rewording, not in rethinking the problems posed by Surrealism.[12]

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[7] Peter Broome and Graham Chesters, *The Appreciation of Modern French Poetry: 1850-1950* (Cambridge: Univ. of Cambridge Press, 1976), p. 29.

[8] André Breton, *Manifestes du surréalisme* (1924,1930; rpt. in one volume, Paris: Gallimard, 1972). All other references are to this edition.

[9] Some better known examples are: Anna Balakian, *Literary Origins of Surrealism* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1947). Anna Balakian, *Surrealism: The Road to the Absolute*. (New York: Noon Day Press, 1947), David Gascoyne, *A Short Survey of Surrealism* (London: Cobden-Sanderson, 1935), Herbert S. Gershman, *The Surrealist Revolution in France* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1969), George Lemaître, *From Cubism to Surrealism in French Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1947), Julien Levy, *Surrealism* (New York: Black Sun Press, 1936), J.H. Matthews,

Because the imagery is so difficult to classify satisfactorily, and because surreal texts are seldom the

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[9] (cont'd) Towards a Poetics of Surrealism (New York: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1976), Maurice Nadeau, Histoire du Surréalisme (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1945) M. Raymond, De Baudelaire au surréalisme: essai sur le mouvement poétique contemporain (Paris: Corréa, 1933), Guillermo de Torre, Historia de las literaturas de vanguardia (Madrid: Ediciones Guadarrama, 1965).

[10] See, for example, Ferdinand Alquié, La philosophie du surréalisme (Paris: Flammarion, 1955), Mary Ann Caws Surrealism and the Literary Imagination (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1966), M. Carrouges, André Breton et les données fondamentales du Surréalisme (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), Charles Gauss, "Theoretical Backgrounds of Surrealism," Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, Vol. 2, no. 8, 1943, pp. 37-44, Jan Topass, La Pensée en révolte: essai sur le surréalisme (Brussels: Henriquez, 1935).

[11] Two notable exceptions to the generalist trend in the critical field are Gerald Mead's recently published book Surreal Imagery: A Stylistic Approach (Berne: Peter Lang, 1978), and Inez Hedges Languages of Revolt: Dada and Surrealist Literature and Film (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1983).

[12] An example of this is found in Caw's discussion of imagery in The Poetry of Dada and Surrealism. (New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1970).

objects of fond perusal, critics have turned their attention toward the more comprehensible theoretical similarities between Breton's and Freud's ideas, focusing the majority of their attention upon the idea of the unconscious. Unfortunately, the connotations of the term "unconscious" are both numerous and ambiguous. Some of the confusion surrounding surreal imagery stems from the tendency of critics to make false cognates of Surrealism, Freudianism, and surreal imagery. The Manifestos have laid a false trail to psychoanalysis as a key to Surrealism; what is needed is a de-psychoanalyzation, or more precisely, a de-Freudianization, of surreal studies.

The application, or misapplication, of the concept of the unconscious in surreal criticism has lead some to a trap door opening into a room filled with phallic symbols and Oedipus complexes. Moreover, the desire to find similarities between Freudian (or Jungian) psychoanalysis, and surrealist endeavours has resulted in studies that extrapolate inappropriate parallels between the surrealists' poetic experimentation for psychic integration and mental illness, which even the surrealists realized is evidence of psychic disintegration. Yet it is the surrealist interest in Freudian psychiatry which most attracts critics and which has lead to serious misinterpretations and misjudgements.

The problem of this critical impasse was succinctly stated a quarter of a century ago by H. M. Block:

> It is surely not too soon to examine the surrealist movement in poetry from a critical standpoint. This

> evaluation has hardly yet begun, partly because of difficulties inherent in surrealist poetry, but also because of misconceptions on the nature of literary surrealism and its consequences. The plain fact is that almost all discussions of surrealism in modern poetry have started from the wrong end. Everyone has read the documents; very few have read the poems in any way except as illustrations of the documents.[13]

While it cannot be disputed that the documents are valuable, especially when one is dealing with a literary movement as opaque as Surrealism, perhaps the time has now arrived when the Manifestos should be placed, at least temporarily, into a secondary position, and an attempt should be made to undertake a study from the "other end," particularily since the first works identified as surreal by Breton and others predate the 1924 Manifesto. The most viable way of isolating Surrealism's distinguishing features is to undertake an inductive historical exploration of major trends in artistic language, especially imagery, since Romanticism. If we examine the creative texts first and the manifesto-inspired guidebooks second, the works themselves may provide us with the information needed to begin a definition of surreal imagery, as a prelude to a definition of Surrealism, or even to a discrimination of surrealisms.

In an effort to eliminate some of the confusion resulting from traditional psychoanalytic and psychological approaches to surrealist imagery, I wish to suggest a new procedure for literary analysis. Although the surrealists built the castle of their aesthetic primarily on the quicksand of Freudianism, I think it would be counterproductive to enmire discussion even further in an analysis of the flaws and virtues of their interpretation of Freud, or of Freud's bafflement about how they could identify with him as their godfather. I therefore propose to set aside the Freudian vocabulary which has been co-opted from his work by so many literary critics. In its place, the less mystical, more neurological discussion of the brain as laterally hemispheric rather than strictly vertical in function shall be employed to illuminate the imagery. The examination of right hemisphere perception and communication should be more illuminating than exploring the unconscious, for we have some objective evidence of right brain activity. When we deal with concepts that are as multi-valent as "subconscious" and "unconscious" in combination with Surrealism, the ensuing discussion often only obfuscates the original issues. Much imagery can, as we will see, be explained without recourse to involved psychological discussions wherein words become archetypal symbols and images become the voice(s) of the unconscious.

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[13] H.M. Block, "Surrealism and Modern Poetry: Outline of an Approach," JAAC, XVIII (1959), 174-75.

The examination begins with a summary of recent developments in hemispheric studies of the brain with emphasis on the ideas of right brain perception and expression, comparing the validity of Breton's original suppositions, attributable to an "unconscious"[14] with what are now proven neurological facts. It then progresses towards a discussion of the language and communicative properties of the two hemispheres with brief mention of the possible roles the two play in creative processes.

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[14] See André Breton, *Premier manifeste du surréalisme* (1924; rpt. Paris: Gallimard, 1972).

Next, I undertake an examination of language modes (the denotative, the connotative and the associative), which are later used in classifying and evaluating texts, showing how these could depend on inter-hemispheric relations. The concepts of contextuality and inferentiality are introduced as two qualities of communication which can be used to differentiate "traditional" from surreal imagery. The subsequent section is dedicated to discussing various types of imagery--memory, dream, imagination, etc.--and showing how the language modes function within the imagery, both descriptively and affectively. Within this discussion I offer several suggestions, based on recent neurological information, about the left and right hemispheres' possible participation in and contribution to various imagery processes.

This is followed by a short discussion of Romanticism, since this movement is the one credited with opening the door to Modernism. An examination and explication de texte--emphasizing imagery--of poems by the representative poets Lamartine, Hugo, Nerval, and Bécquer are provided as part of the basis for the historical examination of the evolution of modernist, particularly surreal, imagery.[15] The initial exploration is followed by a brief history of major literary movements, including Symbolism, Futurism, and Dadaism, up to Surrealism, with emphasis resting on the characteristic imagery found in each. The accent in the survey is primarily on the French tradition, because it is the tradition with which the early surrealists were most familiar and from which, one may speculate, Surrealism evolved. The poets included in this section are Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Marinetti, Mallarmé, and Tzara.[16]

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[15] The poems chosen for this and other examinations were selected with a dual criterion in mind: The first consideration was to find poems which are typical of the poets' general work, and the second was the length of the

My discussion of surrealist imagery is prefaced by a short chapter on André Breton, since he offered the first formalized and substantial body of Surrealism. A brief recapitulation of the salient points brought out in the *Manifestos* is also provided, not as a basis for the examination of the imagery, but rather to illustrate how the careless reading of these documents has resulted in Breton's ideas being misunderstood and/or misinterpreted. The term Surrealism and its adjectival forms are often over-extended. They are used to describe situations, or events which have absolutely nothing to do with the principles of the original artistic movement:

> Rendant compte du débarquement des premiers

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[15] (cont'd) text. Whenever possible the entire poem has been reproduced in order to avoid the possibility of unintentional manipulation which would make the images conform to a preconceived hypothesis.

[16] While discussing the imagenic elements of these poets, I rely heavily on an invaluable book by Marc Eigeldinger (*Le Dynamisme de l'image dans la poésie française du romantisme à nos jours*), whose knowledge and appreciation of much of the period far exceeds my own.

> astronautes sur le sol lunaire en juillet 1969, un journaliste écrivait, pour souligner le plus fortement possible l'aspect insolite de certaines images retransmises par la télévision: "Pour la première fois sans doute, les hommes ont pu contempler un spectacle réel et pourtant parfaitement irrationnel, rompant avec toutes nos habitudes terrestres, un spectacle du plus surréalisme [sic]."[17]

The next chapter is devoted to an examination of surreal imagery from the point of view of the language modalities introduced earlier. At this point, there are regressions in our study during which the images used by the surrealists are compared with those used by romantic and post-romantic writers. This is done to highlight not only the differences, but more importantly the similarities between surreal and other imagery.

The subsequent step is to bring in other poets who have been called surrealists and to subject their work to serious scrutiny using as a basis for analysis and classification the information extracted from the prior examination of French surreal texts. The comparison of images from "surreal" writers from different countries further facilitates the identification of surreal elements in imagery, and helps to isolate these from other modernist characteristics. The poets with whose works this section is primarily concerned are Federico García Lorca from Spain, and J.V. Foix from Catalonia. The latter poet provides a particularily interesting study as criticism has suggested that he actually anticipated the appearance of Surrealism in the world.

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[17] Bréchon, Le Surréalisme, p. 3.

The last chapter is a synthesis of the information obtained throughout the investigation. While it does not pretend to be definitive, it does offer some guidelines for recognizing and differentiating surrealist imagery. But, more importantly perhaps, it destroys some of the myths surrounding a movement which has been credited with far more than it ever sought to or did accomplish.

II. Hemispheric Specialization and Imagery Processes

Throughout the years, many individuals from various times and cultures have hypothesized that there are two parallel but different ways of knowing, a synthesis of which is presented below:

L Mode	R Mode
intellect	intuition
convergent	divergent
digital	analogic
secondary	primary
abstract	concrete
directed	free
propositional	imaginative
lineal	nonlineal
rational	mystical
sequential	multiple
analytic	holistic
objective	subjective
successive	simultaneous[18]

After looking at these lists one problem becomes obvious. Only one of these ways of knowing has ever been systematically and seriously explored in the western world; only one of these ways has been systematically and seriously taught in the schools. As a consequence of this neglect, it has only been in the last few decades that the possible existence of this "other way" of knowing has begun to receive serious critical recognition. Language itself reflected a bias long before the brain became a subject for scientific study. Certain words and phrases had developed in which right and left were basically used as symbols for good and bad, moral and immoral, etc:

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[18] Betty Edwards, Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain (Los Angeles: J.P.Tarcher, 1979),p. 41; Sally Springer and George Deutsch Left Brain, Right Brain (W.H. Freeman & Co., 1981), p. 186.

> Throughout human history, terms with connotations of **good** for the right-hand/left hemisphere and connotations of **bad** for the left-hand/right hemisphere appear in most languages around the world. The Latin word for left is **sinister**, meaning "bad," "ominous," "sinister." The Latin word for right is **dexter** from which comes our word for "dexterity," meaning "skill" or "adroitness." The French word for "left--remember that the left hand is connected to the right hemisphere--is **gauche**, meaning "awkward" from which comes our word "gawky." The French word for right is **droit**, meaning "good," "just," or "proper."[19]

The dictionary lists "clumsy," "awkward," "insincere," and "malicious" as synonyms for "left handed."[20] Although these terms are usually applied to a human action or personality trait (e.g., He has two left feet), Betty Edwards suggests that they can also be inferred to mean the hemispheres that control the hands.[21] The left hand/right hemisphere is linked with ideas of anarchy and feelings that are beyond the reach of "conscious" control; the right hand/left hemisphere is linked with ideas of what is just and proper. Moreover, from the symbolic point of view, the powers of the "unconscious" and of "mystic knowledge" have always been associated with the left.

The discovery of brain duality actually began with the observations of an English physician A.L. Wigan (1844):

> In performing an autopsy on a longtime friend and patient, Wigan disovered that his friend, whose behavior had been normal in every respect until his

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[19] Betty Edwards, Drawing (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher Inc., 1979), p. 33.

[20] Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary (Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1965), p. 481.

[21] Betty Edwards, Drawing, p. 32.

> death, had only one cerebral hemisphere. This discovery led him to speculate that if only one hemisphere can constutite a mind--as clearly had been the case with his dead friend--then the fact that nature has given us two hemispheres means we may actually be in possessions of two "minds."[22]

Extrapolating from this information, Dr. Wigan also postulated that the "two brains are relatively independent during sleep."[23]

However, this speculation was totally eclipsed for one hundred years[24] by surgeon Paul Broca's discovery, in 1864, that language and related capabilities are usually located in the left hemisphere of the brain.[25] Ten years after the publication of his initial observations, the concept now known as **cerebral dominance** began to develop.[26] Because language is considered to be a corollary of thought and thus of higher mental processes, nineteenth century scientists labelled the left hemisphere the dominant or major hemisphere and the right brain the subordinate or minor hemisphere. This major/minor nomenclature also reflected the formerly held view that the right half of the brain was far less advanced than the left, and that the left actually directed the right side functions. In other words, the left hemisphere had been equated with knowledge, because it is this part of mind which is able to make knowledge public through its control of language.

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[22] Gabriele Lusser Rico, Writing the Natural Way (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher Inc., 1983), p. 66.

[23] Lusser Rico, Writing, p. 166.

[24] Lusser Rico, Writing, p. 66.

[25] Today we know that this is true for approximately 98 percent of of right handed people and two thirds of those who are left handed.Betty Edwards, Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher Inc., 1979)p. 27.

[26] Sally P. Springer and Georg Deutsch, Left Brain, Right Brain (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1981), p. 12.

In the latter half of our century, the left dominant theory was challenged and proven to be false when it was determined by researchers lead by Roger Sperry and Ronald Myers that even after commissurotomy, the two hemispheres continued to function independently. The so-called split brain or commissurotomy operation involves separation of the left and right hemispheres by surgically severing the connecting nerve cable called the corpus callosum, the main function of which is to connect the two brain hemispheres and to enable them to "communicate with each other at the rate of thousands of impulses per second."[27] This fibrous nerve bundle facilitates the transmission of memory and learning.[28]

In the 1960's further experiments--this time on neurosurgical patients--lead scientists to postulate that "both hemispheres are involved in higher cognitive functioning, with each half of the brain specialized in complementary fashion for different modes of thinking, both highly complex."[29] Some experts even believe that it is by using the right brain that we "understand metaphors, dream, and create new combinations of ideas."[30] As researcher and teacher Betty Edwards has expressed it, "Each of us has two minds, two consciousnesses, mediated and integrated by the connecting cable of nerve fibers between the hemispheres."[31]

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[27] Lusser Rico, Writing, p. 71.

[28] Edwards, Drawing, p. 29.

[29] Edwards, Drawing, p. 29.

Although a great deal more research needs to be conducted on the issue of laterality, and despite the myriad of conflicting opinions on the subject, those involved in these studies all seem to be in agreement that "hemispheric specialization falls on a **continuum**,[32] that it is a matter of degree rather than an all-or-none concept,"[33] and that right hemisphere potential should be developed.[34]

For the purposes of our discussion, the introduction of the concepts of a cerebral continuum and hemispheric exchanges is interesting. The current formulations tend to support Robert Bréchon's contention that, when Breton listed precursors who were in some aspect surrealist,[35] he was implicitly suggesting that the exchange between the conscious (left hemisphere) and the unconscious mind (right hemisphere), had occurred throughout history, without any intentionality on the part of the poet or the artist. What the surrealists wanted was to induce these exchanges, by suppressing analytic (left hemisphere) thought patterns and releasing holistic (right hemisphere) perceptions. Bréchon explains:

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[30] Edwards, Drawing, p. 35.

[31] Edwards, Drawing, p. 31.

[32] Emphasis my own.

[33] Eran Zaidel, "Concepts of Cerebral Dominance in the Split Brain," Cerebral Correlates of Conscious Experience (Amsterdam: North Holland Publ. Co., 1978) p. 281.

[34] See, for example, the following works: J.E. Bogen and G.M. Bogen, "The Other Side of Creativity," Bulletin of the Los Angeles Neurological Society, 34, 1969, pp. 191-20; Betty Edwards, Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher Inc., 1979); David Galin, "Implications for Psychiatry of Left and Right Cerebral Specialization," Archives of General Psychiatry, 31, 1974, pp. 572-82; Gabriele Lusser Rico, Writing the Natural Way (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher Inc., 1983); Bob Samples, The Metamorphic Mind (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1981).

> Ce que Breton suggère, c'est donc la distinction entre un surréalisme historique daté et localisé, et un surréalisme éternel, qui est une constante de l'esprit humain, de l'imagination, de la sensibilité et du goût, comme on le dit souvent aussi du classique et du baroque.[36]

Working from the assumption that both hemispheres actively contribute in some way to the continuum, a group of researchers at the California Institute of Technology devised a series of tests which differentiated the separate functions of the hemispheres. They found that the right half of the brain is capable of experiencing, responding with feelings and processing information on its own.[37] The results also showed that each hemisphere perceives its own reality, or rather perceives reality in its own way.

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[35] André Breton, Les Manifestes du surréalisme (1924; rpt. (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), pp. 38-39.

[36] Bréchon, Le Surréalisme, (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1971), p. 8.

[37] Edwards, Drawing, p. 29. (Naturally, in majority of people with unsevered corpus callosa, perceptions between the two hemispheres are exchanged and unified to a greater extent than in surgical patients or those suffering from brain damage.)

We now know that these perceptions are encoded in two different ways in the human brain because the optic nerves carry a message of the perception to both the left and right hemispheres via a split in the optic nerve.[38] Apparently these perceptions are then placed in an area of the temporal lobe in which visual and auditory sensory experiences are stored.[39] Scientists speculate that the unknown mechanisms of memory, hallucinations, and dreams may be located in this region.[40]

Recent advances in studies on hemispheric perception have also shown that the hemispheres have different cognitive modes:

> What most characterizes the hemispheres is not that they are specialized to work with different types of material (the left with words and the right with spacial forms); rather, each hemisphere is specialized for a different cognitive style; the left for an analytical, logical mode for which words are an excellent tool, and the right for a holistic, gestalt mode, which happens to be particularly suitable for spatial relations, as well as music.[41]

After extensive research, an explanation for these oppositions has been presented:

> E. Goldberg of the State University of New York and Louis Costa of the University of Victoria, British

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[38] Bob Samples, The Metaphoric Mind (Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1981), p. 22.

[39] Mike Samuels and Nancy Samuels, Seeing With the Mind's Eye (New York: Random House Inc., 1975), p. 59.

[40] S. A. Gatz, Manter's Essentials of Clinical Neuroanatomy and Neurophysiology, (Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Co., 1970), p. 112.

[41] David Galin, "Implications for Psychiatry of Left and Right Cerebral Specialization," Archives of General Psychiatry, 31, 1974, p. 573.

> Columbia have proposed that these hemispheric differences exist because the two halves of the brain are 'wired' differently. They say that the right hemisphere has a greater neuronal 'interregional connectivity' and so can handle novel material better, whereas the left hemisphere, because of its sequential neuronal organization, has superior compact storage of well-routinized pre-existing codes. They suggest that the right hemisphere has a greater neuronal capacity to deal with informational complexity for which no learned program is readily available. By contrast, the left hemisphere relies heavily on previously accumulated, sequentially organized information. Thus the right hemisphere is specialized for the initial orientation of a task for which no pre-exisiting routine is available. If their conclusions are correct, it has much to tell us about the directionality of hemispheric involvement at different stages in the creative process or in any complex symbolic activity that moves from novel to known, such as natural writing.[42]

Relatively recently specialists have also become interested in testing the communication abilities of the brain. When scientists examined the processing of information in the two halves they found that, although the right hemisphere is generally mute, it has good language comprehension both for spoken and written words.[43] What it cannot do, however, is to string words together like the left brain does, because it has a highly limited syntactic ability.[44] Eran Zaidel, a prominent researcher in neurology, whose primary interest lies in exploring the linguistic capabilities of the right brain, describes his findings:

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[42] Lusser Rico, *Writing*, pp. 70-71.

[43] Jerre Levy, "Lateral Differences in the Human Brain in Cognition and Behavioural Control," in *Cerebral Correlates of Conscious Experience* eds. Pierre Buser and Arlette Rougeul-Buser (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publ. Co., 1978), p. 285.

[44] Lusser Rico, *Writing*, p. 76.

> The right hemispheres have no speech, little writing, substantial visual vocabularies and surprisingly rich auditory lexicons. The right hemisphere has good grasp of pictorial semantics in terms of everyday social experience but the semantic structure of the right hemisphere vocabulary seems more diffuse and connotative than left hemisphere reference.[45]

Further research showed that the right hemisphere perceives words as auditory or visual gestalts, while the left hemisphere perceives speech by phonetic analysis.[46] Therefore, "while the left hemisphere probably constructs spoken language by the generation of phoneme-elicited articulemes properly ordered in time, the right hemisphere would only be able to generate spoken words for which it possessed articulatory Gestalts."[47] There is a current hypothesis, put forth by Eran Zaidel, which suggests that "right hemisphere vocabulary is characteristically connotative and associative rather than precise and denotative."[48] The observations of Dr. Galin, from the Langley-Porter Neuro-Psychiatric Institute, support Zaidel's argument:

> When the right hemisphere did express itself in language, we might expect its use of words to reflect its characteristic holistic style, because it deals more effectively with complex patterns taken as a whole than with the individual parts taken separately, we might expect metaphors, puns,

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[45] Eran Zaidel, "Lexical Organization in the Right Hemisphere," in Cerebral Correlates, p. 177.

[46] Zaidel, Cerebral correlates, p. 183

[47] Levy, Cerebral Correlates, p. 290.

[48] Zaidel, Cerebral Correlates, p. 183.

double-entendre and *rebus* i.e. word pictures.[49] Another specialist believes that "The curse words and clichéd phrases of Broca's asphasics may be examples of such holistically generated speech."[50]

These scientific discoveries have great importance for the literary field since different perceptual modalities are of paramount importance in much modern literature, especially that which developed during the 1920's. The new information suggests that imagery resulting from the exploration of the right brain, or as the surrealists chose to call it, the "unconscious," does indeed reflect a certain way of seeing the world, a certain ordering process, which, while it influences each person's conduct, usually remains concealed on the "other side" of the corpus callosum. The implications of these advances in neurology for the examination of surrealist imagery become even more obvious when we examine Galin's statement that "certain aspects of right hemisphere functioning are congruent with the mode of cognition psychoanalysts have termed primary processes, the form of thought that Freud originally assigned to the system Unconscious."[51] Since we know that Breton borrowed this term directly from Freud, Breton's "unconscious" appears to be closely related to the neurologists' right hemisphere.

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[49] David Galin, "Implications for Psychiatry," p. 574.

[50] Levy, Cerebral Correlates, p. 290. Broca's Asphasia is a language disorder, characterized by the inability to use or to understand language. It results from a lesion located in the left cerebral hemisphere half way between the frontal and temporal lobe in a region called Broca's area.

[51] Galin, "Implications for Psychiatry," p. 574.

Breton's faith in dreams as valid perceptual modalities is backed by experiments involving the electro-encephalograph, which have shown that during REM (the dream period in sleep) the right hemisphere becomes more active.[52] Dr. Galin goes one step further in his discussion when he suggests that the right hemisphere controls dreaming:

> Most dreaming is done with the right brain, hence the nonsequential, nontemporal nature of dreams, with their overlapping images drawn from time past as well as time present, from familiar and unfamiliar, from geographically near and far.[53]

Interestingly, Breton's belief that part of the mind was literally being cut off from active participation in life, receives additional support from studies which have shown that "mental events in the right hemisphere can become disconnected functionally from the left hemisphere.[54] The corpus callosum is able to inhibit the informational exchange between the hemispheres when it is more advantageous to focus the talents of one on a given task.[55]

Recently released studies in the fields of neurobiology and biophysical chemistry, which have addressed the question of different types of perception (specifically ones that involve a reduction in left hemisphere activity), also support the surrealists' belief in the legitimacy of observations born from delusions, trances, and visions:

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[52] Lusser Rico, Writing, pp. 166-67.

[53] David Galin paraphrased by Lusser Rico, Writing, p. 167.

[54] Galin, "Implications for Psychiatry," p. 575.

[55] Lusser Rico, Writing, p. 71.

> Nobody will deny that conscious perception is possible not only during states of "highest attention" (however defined), but also during states of reduced consciousness such as sleep state one, delusional states, etc. Sensations in such states may enter consciousness although through unusual doors, and may be incorporated into conscious experience. Conscious experience is even possible during deep sleep, as dreaming, and during pathological states of clinically reduced consciousness.[56]

R.M. Bucke, a turn of the century Canadian psychiatrist, also recognized the existence of another perceptual mode--similar to that which interested the surrealists--which he called cosmic consciousness:

> The prime characteristic of the cosmic consciousness is a consciousness of . . .the life and order of the universe. Along with the consciousness of the cosmos there occurs an intellectual enlightenment which alone would place the individual on a new plane of existence--would make him almost a member of a new species.[57]

The literary critic Thomas Williams provides us with a succinct description of this experience:

> The essential elements are all present: absolute conviction of the truth of the revelation, a heightened power of perception which reveals fundamental unity and eternity of self and the world, and the subsequent transformation of the level of consciousness to that of a "new

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[56] Otto D. Creutzfeldt and Gunter Rager, "Brain Mechanisms and the Phenomenology of Conscious Experience," Cerebral Correlates, p. 313. In addition, Canadian brain surgeon Wilder Penfield found that mild electrical stimulation of a patient's right temporal lobe usually produced visual illusions of vividly recalled memories--images--while probes of the left hemisphere did not. Lusser Rico, Writing, p. 167.

[57] R.M. Buck, quoted by William James in The Varieties of Religious Experience (New York: Random House, 1946), p. 306.

species."[58]

Writer Aldous Huxley tells of his encounters with these "surreal" perceptions in his work The Doors of Perception. Huxley agrees with Bergson and Breton that the main function of the brain, as it is generally used, is eliminative, that it culls out of our perception all that is not necessary to, and indeed, all that might be harmful to, adaptation and survival. The brain is a practical organ, a "reducing valve" through which only that which is useful is normally allowed to pass.[59] Huxley argues that states of altered perceptual modes--which many surrealists induced and explored--effectively by-pass the reducing function of time and space. In his experience, as in the surrealist experience of *le merveilleux*, the mind perceives in terms of intensity of existence, profundity of significance, and relationships within a pattern.[60]

However, both Huxley and Breton were made to realize that although different perceptual modes could increase creative ability, these altered states are potentially dangerous:

> Confronted by a chair which looked like a Last Judgement..., which, after a long time and considerable difficulty I recognized as a chair, I found myself all at once on the brink of panic. This, I suddenly felt was going too far. Too far,

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[58] Thomas A. Williams, Mallarmé and the Language of Mysticism (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1970), p. 5.

[59] Aldous Huxley, The Doors of Perception (London: Chatto & Windus, 1954), p. 22.

[60] Huxley, The Doors, p. 26.

> even though the going was into deeper beauty, deeper significance. The fear, as I analyze it in retrospect, was of being overwhelmed, of disintegrating under a pressure of reality greater than a mind accustomed to living most of the time in a cozy world of symbols could possibly bear.[41]

The critic Jean-Pierre Chauvin discusses the surrealist experiments with perceptual modalities:

> The authors (Breton and Soupault) had induced what might be termed self-hypnotic trances, thus enormously enhancing their receptivity to the subliminal messages dictated by their inner voices. The hallucinogenic impact of such sessions, while literarily fruitful, nonetheless gave Breton pause. An inherent peril lay in the impression that such images could make upon the conscious mind, namely an increasing inability to retain a sense of reality." Eventually the violent and self-destructive behaviour of the participants led Breton to terminate these sessions.[42]

Even though the surrealists eventually had to abandon this method of exploring and exploiting imagery, the creative process remained of great interest to them.

Most current theories on creativity are based on the belief that images, derived from past perceptions, are formed and stored in the unconscious or right hemisphere, where the conscious or left hemisphere can become aware of them from time to time. The contention is that much of the creative process takes place without the individual being aware of it:

> Within the unconscious images can become associated to form streams of images, that they can juxtapose to form combination images or coalesce and recombine

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[41] Huxley, p. 55.

[42] Jean-Pierre Chauvin in "The Poethics Breton," Jean-Pierre Chauvin and Mary-Ann Caws, Breton: A Bilingual Anthology (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1982), pp. xxvi-xxvii.

> to form entirely new images. All this activity takes place without a person's awareness, but sometimes the results of these processes surface in conscious thought and catch his or her attention.[63]

Dr. G. Wallis, a well known researcher in this field, postulates that there are four stages in the creative process--a theory that is accepted by many researchers.[64] The first one he calls the **preparation** stage. During this time, people consciously collect information relevant to them which they then store until it is needed. These processes are controlled by the left hemisphere.

In the second stage, called **incubation**, people release their conscious hold on the subject matter and focus their attention elsewhere. Some specialists believe that during this stage, images already stored in the unconscious shift and realign themselves.[65] Most researchers are of the opinion that this is the critical stage in creativity and that it involves, to varying degrees, altered perceptual modes. Dreams, daydreams, fantasies, hallucinations, hypnagogesis, and hypnopompesis are thought to be states conducive to this process. During this stage the analytical actions of the left brain are reduced, and the right brain becomes more active, with perceptual dominance moving through the corpus callosum from left to right.

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[63] Mike and Nancy Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye, p. 240.

[64] Dr. G. Wallis, quoted by Mike and Nancy Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye, p. 239-40.

[65] Mike and Nancy Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye p. 299.

In the third stage--**illumination**--inspiration appears to occur spontaneously and unexpectedly, usually accompanied by feelings of certainty and elation. This is the moment of discovery when images first come to a poet or when a painter first sees his outline. The current assumption is that, during this time, an information exchange between the two hemispheres occurs, with perceptual dominance moving from right to left.

The last stage is known as either **verification** or **revision.** This is when details are worked out and ideas or perceptions are made evident within a form or structure. This, like the first stage, is governed by the left hemisphere.

American biologist and philospher E.W. Sinnott also believes that the creative process takes place in a condition of reduced left hemisphere activity:

> In dreams and half-dreaming states the mind is filled with a throng of images. Here the natural tendencies and predilections of living stuff come to expression. More than all, I think, here the organizing power of life fashions into orderly patterns the floating fantasies of the unconscious mind. . . Among the throng of random images and ideas, the unconscious mind rejects certain combinations as unimportant or incompatible but sees the significance of others. By its (the unconscious) means, order--intellectual, esthetic, perhaps spiritual order--is here distinguished from randomness. . .One must recognize the operation in the unconscious of such an organizing factor, for chance alone is not creative. Just as the organism pulls together random, formless stuff into the patterned system of structure and function in the body, so the unconscious mind seems to select and arrange and correlate these ideas and images into a pattern. The resemblances between the two processes is close. The concept is worth considering that the organizing power of life, manifest in mind as well

> as in body--for the two are hardly separable--is the truly creative element. Creativity thus becomes an attribute of life.[16]

Harold Rugg, from Columbia University, largely agrees with Sinnott's theories and postulates that creativity occurs in what he calls the **transliminal mind**, which is a sort of chamber between the conscious and the unconscious. He identifies this area with Eastern meditation states, with light auto-hypnotic trances, with intuition, and with hynagogic states. The transliminal mind is characterized by a state of relaxed readiness or relaxed concentration.[17]

As a result of these and other extensive investigations and interviews with creative people, it was discovered that artists occasionally realize the creative moment is not always utterly beyond their control. Listed below are some interesting examples concerning well-known artists' attempts to induce creativity:

1. Samuel Johnson needed a purring cat, an orange peel, and a cup of tea in order to write.
2. Proust wrote in a soundproof room.
3. Kipling needed jet black ink to write.
4. Kant wrote at precise times of day, in bed, staring at a tower (and was so disturbed when trees began to obscure the tower than he had them cut down).[18]
5. Rousseau thought bare-headed in full sunshine.
6. Beethoven poured cold water over his head, believing that it stimulated his brain.
7. Rossini covered himself with blankets while composing.

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[16] P.E. Vernon, Creativity, Selected Readings (New York: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 111.

[17] Harold Rugg, Imagination (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 297.

[18] T. S. Knowlson, quoted by Mike and Nancy Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye, p. 256.

8. Dickens turned his bed to the north, believing that the magnetic forces helped him to create.[69]

In the last twenty-five years, research psychologists have also begun to study the possibility of increasing creativity in ordinary people by inducing states where left hemisphere activity is reduced and teaching people to be receptive to the ideas produced from enhanced right hemisphere activity . This is basically what Breton and other surrealists were trying to do over forty years ago, when they attempted to find states which would allow them to liberate their perceptual and cogitive processes from analytic thought. Indeed, specialists in neurology have begun to echo Breton's belief in the importance of integration. Many now contend that only when the two hemispheres are fully active and integrated can creativity, man's highest function occur.[70] Carl Rogers also sees creativity as a process occurring in the unusually sensitive and well-integrated personality.[71]

However, occasionally when right hemisphere perception is overly dominant or dominant at inappropriate times, creativity and insanity appear to converge. Actually, inspiration is sometimes said to be near to madness.[72] Since surrealists, psychologists, and neurologists have expressed an interest in the relationships between creative processes and artistic manifestations of insanity--including imagery expressed through language--let us now turn our attention towards some considerations about communicative modalities.

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[69] E. Hutchinson, quoted by Mike and Nancy Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye, p. 256.

[70] J.E. Bogen and G.M. Bogen, "The Other Side of the Brain: III. The Corpus Callosum and Creativity," Bulletin of the Los Angeles Neurological Society, Vol. 34, pp. 191-220, 1969.

[71] Carl Rogers, "Towards a Theory of Creativity," in Creativity: Selected Readings, ed. P.E. Vernon (New York: Penguin Books, 1970), pp. 137-51.

Many people may find the idea that the insane individual's perceptual mode is not only different but, on occasion, both accurate and profound difficult to accept. However recent research has shown that, while the idiosyncratic worlds of the insane have different boundaries than our world, within these worlds there is often evidence of underlying governing logic. This discovery has lead specialists to suggest that some dementias are actually the visible evidence of different modes of perception which induce individuals to see and react in different ways, not all of them negative.

Indeed, some psychiatrists such as R.D. Laing and David Cooper have gone so far as to glorify schizophrenia, and certain specialists have suggested that "there is something beneficial in madness that is part of our general heritage, is resistant to extinction and may have beneficial aspects.[73] Other, more moderate ones, believe that by listening to the mentally ill, "we may gain untold insight in dimensions of reality still to be explored and understood."[74]

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[72] Stephen Spender discusses the similarities between madness and inspiration in, "The Making of a Poem," in Creativity: Selected Readings, ed. P.E. Vernon (New York: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 61.

[73] Fadman and Kewman, eds., Exploring Madness: Experience, Theory, and Rsearch (Monterray: Brooks/Cole

Not surprisingly, over the years, victims of certain mental illnesses and the surrealists have shared a common problem. They do not communicate their perceptions and ideational processes within the strict confines of standard language, with the result that their communications are subject to devaluation, and eventual dismissal. Certain analysts realize the potential dangers of this situation and are voicing their emerging concern over their inability to understand the patients' communications. One of the more succinct comments on the subject was made by Drs. Hayward and Taylor:

> One of the principal problems to be overcome, in efforts to increase the effectiveness of psychotherapy of the psychoses, centers around communication. In the past there has been a tendency to dismiss the patient as using "neologism" or "bizarre gestures" or the like. Actually if the therapist will take the time to listen to the patient, or observe him minutely, over a long period, he will begin to see a method in the madness.[75]

The patients' observations, like those made by surrealists, reflect frustration and preoccupation with language limitations. Included below are representative examples of statements made by mentally ill individuals about their

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[73](cont'd) Publishing Co., 1973), p. 5.

[74] James Fadman and Donald Kewman, Exploring Madness, p. 11.

[75] Bert Kaplan, ed., The Inner World of Mental Illness (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 333.

problems with communication:

> 1. I do not know how--with only the blunt point of a lead pencil and the inadequate words I have at my command, to get a likeness of her onto paper. A pencil and commonplace words. With these I cannot depict the noon-day brightness of the highlights in her loveliness or shade the shadows of midnight blackness in the tragic abyss which envelopes her!
> 2. The words in the English language are futile.
> 3. Meeting you made me feel like a traveller who's been lost in a land where no one speaks his language.[76]

Often the "unconscious" or "right hemisphere," is considered as a mysterious sort of netherland into which only lunatics may enter. However, psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz, has offered the interesting suggestion that the "unconscious" (right hemisphere dominance) can be conceived of as a form of communication which operates on a cerebral continuum.[77] This formulation implies that surrealist writing could be considered as one of the most consistent artistic manifestations of imagery, which is based in right hemisphere activity. Indeed, this doctor's view of the language/brain relationship is analogous to that of the surrealists. In 1930, Breton discussed his views on this relationship in the Introduction to "Les Possessions" (the second section of L'Immaculée Conception co-authored with Paul Éluard).

> L'esprit dressé poétiquement chez l'homme normal, est capable de reproduire dans ses grands traits les manifestations verbales les plus paradoxales, les plus excentriques sans que cela soit susceptible de

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[76] Thomas Szasz, The Myth of Mental Illness (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 107-110.

[77] Szasz, The Myth, pp. 107-47.

compromettre en rien sa faculté d'équilibre.[78]

Forty-four years later Szasz expressed the same idea in his introduction to The Myth of Mental Illness:

> But let us suppose that there is no such thing as mental health or mental illness, that these terms refer to nothing more substantial than did the astrological notion of the influence of planetary positions on personal conduct.[79]

The first step towards increased recognition and comprehension of different communicative processes is to obtain a better understanding of the language modes being used. Thus, we shall devote the next chapter to exploring the various modalities and discussing the influence that the cerebral hemispheres have on imagenic communication.

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[78] André Breton and Paul Eluard, L'Immaculée conception (1930; rpt. Paris: Gallimard, 1961), p. 25.

[79] Szasz, The Myth, p. 125.

III. Language Modalities in Communications

The surrealists' attitude towards language is best expressed in Breton's statement that "Le langage a été donné à l'homme pour qu'il en fasse un usage surrealiste."[80] This assertion is interesting, for it shows that despite the novelty of surrealists' manipulation of language, their real aim was to transform thought and life through the medium of a language they had inherited without question. Language has a place of honour in the surrealist movement, primarily because it is the vehicle for expressing, and possibly even creating imagery. However, since the linguistic elements in surreal imagery are no different from those found in non-surreal imagery, I would like to suggest that it would be prudent not only to describe the images, but also to examine how language functions in different imagery types.

Generally speaking, studies and analyses of imagery have focused on the nature and interpretation of images, but have not dealt, to any great extent, with the creation of effective metaphors. While the interpretive approach is fruitful when dealing with traditional imagery which is more concerned with conceptual than perceptual aspects, it essentially breaks down when, as in some modernist imagery, alternate perceptual modes take precedence over normative ones. This modality change is sometimes carried to such an extent that there is no longer a demanded, verifiable reading.

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[80] André Breton, *Les Manifestes du surréalisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), p. 46.

In recent years, a substantial amount of scientific work has been done which addresses the inter-related problems of perception, communication, and knowledge. However, because the scientists have not ventured to apply their findings to actual literary texts, their studies have gone virtually unnoticed by the majority of humanists. The concept of **Frame-theory** is one such scientific model yet to be widely exploited in literary theory and criticism. The aim of frame-theory, as developed by Marvin Minsky, Terry Winograd, and others, is to offer a model of learning and memory which helps to discover not only how human beings recognize visual shapes, social situations, or linguistic contexts, but also how they learn new ideas when confronted by the unknown.[81]

Van Dijk explains how the theory works:

> Much of the phenomenological power of the theory hinges on the inclusion of expectations and other kinds of presumptions. A frame's terminals are normally already filled with "default" assignments. Thus, a frame may contain a great many details whose supposition is not specifically warranted by the situation.... The frame systems are linked, in turn, by an information retrieval network. When a proposed frame cannot be made to fit reality--when we cannot find terminal marker conditions--this network provides a replacement frame.[82]

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[81] Marvin Minsky, "A Framework for Representing Knowledge," in Patrick H. Winston, ed., The Psychology of Computer Vision (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), pp. 211-77; and Terry Winograd, "A Framework for Understanding Discourse," in Marcel Adam Just and Patricia A. Carpenter, eds., Cognitive Processes in Comprehension (Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1977), pp. 63-88.

[82] Teun A. van Dijk, "Semantic Macro-Structures and Knowledge Frames in Discourse Comprehension," in Marcel Adam Just and Patricia A. Carpenter, eds., Cognitive Processes in Comprehension (Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates,

Within the last five years, critics have begun to extend the concept of frames to literature. They contend that a reader's perception of literary frames (e.g. theme and genre), leads him to employ different reading strategies when attempting to comprehend the text.[83] In frame-theory, the reading or perception of a work is viewed as an inductive process in which the reader/perceiver tries to "match" perceived structures with conceptual frames stored in memory. In the matching process he calls up one frame after another until a match is made. If, in the individual's memory, there is no framework in which the new perceptions can be coordinated, he will 1) attempt to construct a new one by both building on his present knowledge, and by extrapolating from it, or 2) close his mind to the whole problem.[84]

Inez Hedges, who applies frame-theory to literature, argues that "the literary and artistic relevance of this theory would base itself on the idea that new art forms are created in order to publicize and promulgate changes in the modalities of perception of an era."[85] Thus, she contends that the different communicative forms found in great art

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[82] (cont'd) 1977), p. 21.

[83] A collection of articles applying frame theory in the analysis of discourse is found in Dieter Metzing, ed., Frame Conceptions and Text Understanding (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1980).

[84] Inez Hedges, Languages of Revolt (Durham: Duke University Press, 1983), p. 58.

[85] Hedges, Languages, p. xviii.

and literature enable us to keep abreast of our ever changing conceptualization and perceptualization of reality. Occasionally these forms even foreshadow developments.

For example, André Breton's once shocking view of language as an essentially reductive phenomenon which limits man's thought, has, over the last sixty odd years, been taken up and expanded upon by linguists, one of the best known of these being Benjamin Whorf. He, like the surrealists, argues that to use language normatively is to limit oneself to modes of perception that are already inherent in the language.[46] Further support for Breton's initial presentiment is found in the macro-structure theory of frame-making proposed by researcher Teun A. van Dijk, and backed by studies in human memory and recall.[47] According to this theory, language frames are derived by reductive processes which delete information that is not useful for constructing a frame.[48]

Let us begin our examination of communicative frameworks, and their contribution to imagery formation with a short introduction to, and definition of, certain key terms which we will employ in the classification and identification of images.

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[46] Benjamin Lee Whorf, Language, Thought, and Reality (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1956).

[47] Research in the fields of human memory and recall support this hypothesis. See Inez Hedges, Languages, p. 58.

[48] Teun A. van Dijk, Text and Context (New York: Longman, 1977), pp. 144-46.

Language, as the term is generally used,[9] is defined as a communication system composed of words (signs written or spoken), which convey information through a complex network of rules. The combination of these signs imparts information.

The first term to be defined is **source sign.** By this I mean each word (sign) which is found in a language communication, whether it is expressed verbally, or in written form, and whether it is found in an imagenic, or a non-imagenic surrounding. For example, in the sentence "It was a Sunday morning in the very height of spring,"[10] the source signs are: It, was, a, Sunday, morning, in, the, very, height, of, spring.[11] Source signs are defined the same way for imagenic message transfers as we seen in this stanza by the Spanish poet Gustavo Adolfo Béquer:

> Yo me he asomado a las profundas simas
> de la tierra y del cielo
> y les he visto el fin, o con los ojos
> o con el pensamiento.[12]

In this example, the source signs are: (he) asomado, profundas, simas, tierra, cielo, (he) visto, fin, ojos, pensamiento. Each of these source signs has a group of words which is logically related to it by some common feature. For example, the sign "tierra" can be connected with signs such as world, grass, green, mother, growth, ranch, etc. The various relationships between the source sign and these signs can be verified through the use of analytical thought processes. Signs whose relations to the source sign, can be so confirmed, are called **direct derivatives.** When taken as a group these direct derivatives form the source sign's **paradigm.** For example, a possible paradigm for "cielo" could include the direct derivatives blue, sun, cloud, airplane, moon, etc. **Indirect derivatives** are formed by making direct derivatives for a direct derivative of the source word. Indirect derivatives can be considered to have an infinite paradigm since, if necessary, the procedure can be repeated _ad infinitum_. When paradigms of indirect derivatives are employed to decode a message, they no longer have to be logically related to the source sign. For example, in the communication "Yo me ha asomado a las profundas simas / de la tierra y del cielo," some indirect derivatives for cielo could be desk, geology, lemonade, etc. Likewise in Paul Eluard's famous line, "La terre est bleue comme une orange," the paradigm of indirect derivatives could include virtually anything and everything, e.g. peace, hope, telephone, round, etc.

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[9] I omit here the contentious issues regarding body language, subliminal language, etc.

[10] Franz Kafka, The Penal Colony: Stories and Short Pieces tr. Willa and Edwin Muir (1948; rpt., New York: Schocken Books, 1976), p. 49.

[11] Although each word in the sentence is a source sign, only the ones which function as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, are actively contributing to the message transfer. Signs which function as linking words (to, of, because, etc.), or as definers (a, the, etc.) and which do not perform a reductive or qualifying function, are not commented upon.

[12] Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, "Rimas," No. XLVII in Obras completas (Barcelona: Editorial Bruguera, 1970), p. 104.

The first important element to be examined in our discussion of **language frameworks** as communicative processes, is **discursiveness.** The extent to which a language exhibits this characteristic is determined by the "degree of arbitrariness in the symbolization."[13] For example, when a physicist says let "g" stand for the force of gravity he is using a fully discursive and conventional symbol. Likewise when a child says "I want a hotdog" he is using discursive symbolism. Everyone communicating through the English language system has tacitly agreed that the word "hotdog" is used to denote a particular type of food.

For years scholars had believed that discursiveness must exist in communications, otherwise language could be nothing more than meaningly noises.[14] However, for some time now, certain specialists have realized the existence of non-discursive languages.[15] Moreover, they are beginning to accept them as valid communicative forms. Indeed, a school of thought has been developing which states the need for a "genuine semantic beyond the limits of discursive language."[16] Anatol Rapoport has even hypothesized that non-discursive symbols reflect the inner states of the individual.[17] This is opposed to the radically positivist view that non-discursive language has no referents--a view which is no longer widely accepted. Today non-discursive languages are thought to have referents and cognitive meaning. Thomas Chetwynd has gone so far as to suggest that non-discursive language is the only kind based on true symbols, for he states that "consciously contrived comparisons are not true symbols."[18] He argues that symbols erupt spontaneously from the "unconscious" (right hemisphere), that they express the relationship between man and the cosmos, and that the conscious intellect, limited to its own resources, misunderstands or misappropriates this symbolic language. In other words, symbols can be contaminated by conscious imposition of inappropriate frames constructed by the analytical faculties, and this can lead to the intellectual pitfall of interpreting one symbol in terms of another, thus reducing the meanings of both. One might conclude that, eventually, the process could lead to the overall reduction of language and this is, in essence, the fear that the surrealists had concerning communications.

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[13] Thomas Szasz, *The Myth of Mental Illness* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 125. Breton valued "l'arbitraire" highly.

[14] Szasz, *The Myth*, p. 126.

[15] Non-discursive languages are those which do not exhibit arbitrary (collectively comprehensible) signs as, for example, some schizophrenic communication.

[16] Suzanne Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key* (New York: Mentor Books, 1953), p. 70.

The problem is, of course, that even when these non-discursive languages are granted the "official recognition" that Szasz and others advocate, they are still highly individualistic in nature. Each person communicating non-discursively has his own unique vocabulary. Consequently, non-discursive languages cannot transfer information which would be immediately and consistently understood by a collective group of people. While Mr. Chetwynd's argument invites some interesting philosophical debates, it basically limits the parameters of language. He only grants recogition to symbols which have become archetypes. In doing so, he unfairly excludes many literary symbols which have evolved over the years (e.g. rose, dove, star, etc.), and precludes the development of others.

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[17] Anatol Rapoport, Operational Philosophy: Integrating Knowledge and Action (New York: Harper and Row, 1954), p. 199.

[18] Tom Chetwynd, A Dictionary of Symbols (New York: Granada Publ. Co., 1982), p. 11.

In contrast to discursive language (left brain dominant), non-discursive language (right brain dominant), does not deal with abstract concepts, for these are developed through sequential and analytic processes. Right hemisphere language--being unable to process abstract ideas--can only communicate the concrete.[99] When the right hemisphere does become active in communicative processes, it reduces the individual's tendency to perceive the world in abstract, non-emotive terms. Some specialists actually contend that the use of normative left hemisphere dominant language serves to isolate people, rather than to bring them together.[100] Thus left hemisphere activity increases the tendency to perceive the world in abstract terms. Dr. Szasz comments on the problem of abstraction in discursive language when he observes that "Human beings do not suffer from Oedipus complexes, sexual frustration, or pent-up anger, as abstractions; they suffer from their specific relationships with parents, mates, children, employers, and so on."[101]

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[99] The right hemisphere's ability to express itself in language is almost exclusively limited to nouns. See Michael S. Gazzaniga, *The Bisected Brain: Neuroscience Series* (New York: Appletone-Century-Crofts, 1970), p. 129; and Jerre Levy's and Eran Zaidel's articles in *Correlates of Conscious Experience* eds. Pierre Buser and Arlette Rougeul Busser (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Co., 1978).

[100] Mike and Nancy Samuels, *Seeing with the Mind's Eye* (New York: Random House, 1975).

The extent to which language frameworks manifest discursive or non-discursive qualities is determined by three considerations: 1. **contextuality**, 2. **inferentiality**, and 3. the **language mode** being used, i.e. whether the modality is predominantly **Literal**, **Figurative**, or **Associative**.

The first element, **contextuality**, is the conditioning of meaning through context and content. The meaning(s) of a word is qualified or limited by the meaning(s) of the words which surround it:

1. She is walking her afghan.
2. She is knitting an alpaca.
3. They are cooking chile.
4. He is putting some money in the kitty.

We know from contextual evidence that the afghan referred to is a dog, not a blanket, that the alpaca is a sweater, not a wooly haired mammal, that chile is a food, not a country, and that the kitty is a type of depository for money, not a feline.

When communications cannot be decoded contextually, we must have recourse to the second important concept which is that of **inferentiality.** This means that "In addition to containing the relational information explicitly conveyed by the linguistic message, semantic memory may also contain information about relations which can logically be inferred from the message."[102]

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[101] Szasz, The Myth, p. 128.

1. His daughter has hair of gold.
2. She eats like a bird.
3. He has a heart of stone.
4. Her eyes were shooting sparks.

We know through the use of inferential processes that the analogy with gold refers to color, not texture, that she eats very little, not that she pecks for food, etc.

The last considerations to be discussed are the different **language modalities.** We will examine how they partipate in, and contribute to communicative processes. These modalities, like hemispheric perception itself, operate on a continuum, and the majority of literary communication consists of a combination of the three language modes. Very seldom does a reader encounter purely literal, figurative, or associative modalities.[103]

Language used in the **Literal** mode is, above all else, specific, being best known for its ability to instruct and organize. Its function is to name or indicate a known object, or concept or a definable class of objects or concepts. Literal message transfers provide information as clearly as possible, eschewing ambiguity. All signs manifest a direct and logical relationship to one another, communicating through complex networks of connections which are amiable to analytical decoding. The literal mode is distinguished in that its message transfer always satisfies both contextual and inferential demands. Since these communications do fulfill all analytic requirements--having paradigms in which the signs are all logically related to the source sign--we know that literal language is discursive. Therefore, we also know that this modality must operate under left hemisphere dominance.

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[102] E. Wanner, T.J. Teyler, "The Psychobiology of Speech and Language," Progress in Clinical Neurophysiology (Switzerland: S. Karger, 1977) p. 10.

[103] When I state that language is operating in one of these modalities, I am referring to the dominant mode in the communicative process.

Purely literal language does not exist in traditional poetic imagery, as such language cannot participate in communications which involve analogical levels. It is, nonetheless, often conducive to the formation of visual imagery as, for example, in the sentence "The Marquise went out at five," where the reader may form a mental picture of the Marquise' appearance.

The second modality--the **Figurative**--is the one encountered with greatest frequency in poetic imagery. When operating in this mode, language includes figures of speech and encompasses figurative levels of meaning. In Figurative communications, as in those which are Literal, all of the signs included in the paradigms have to be logically derived from the source sign. However, language in this mode does not transfer messages which can be satisfactorily decoded through purely contextual reading processes. Rather, this modality requires the reader to employ the technique of inferentiality.

For example, the imagenic statement "From the ashes of broken dreams comes music," cannot be understood contextually. To decode the communication, the reader must refer to various previously established frameworks, which relate the source signs ashes, broken, dreams, and music to both sadness and pleasant sounds. The same basic processes must be exercised when reading Wordsworth's line "My heart leaps up when I behold / A rainbow in the sky." In order to decode the intended message, the reader must recall frameworks which, when combined, will relate the action of leaping with the emotion of happiness.

An important aspect of the Figurative language modality is that of **affectivity**. The term affectivity refers to the potential of an image to evoke an irrational, emotional response, which is quite separate from the communicational content itself, as we see in first stanza of García Lorca's poem "Romance de la Guardia Civil."

> Los caballos negros son,
> Las herraduras son negras.
> Sobre las capas relucen
> manchas de tinta y de cera.
> Tienen, por eso no lloran,
> de plomo las calveras.
> Jorobados y nocturnos,
> por donde animan ordenan
> silencios de goma oscura
> y miedos de fina arena.
> Pasan si quieren pasar,
> y ocultan en la cabeza
> una vaga astronomía
> de pistolas inconcretas.[104]

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[104] Federico García Lorca, *Obras completas* (Madrid:

In addition to the actual content (which is decoded through contextuality and inferentiality), when reading these lines certain individuals may experience a vague, unreasonable feeling of fear, or even depression. This emotional reaction is not rationally related to the message's manifest content, but probably arises from the words' latent content. Unfortunately, the contentious issue of the import of latent content on a reader's reaction to a text has not been adequately or convincingly explored. Therefore, while an affective response to images has constituted a major component in imagery since Romanticism, it still remains far too individualistic to be used as a criterion in either the identification or classification of imagery.

Our linguistic conditioning--most of which is centered on contextual and inferential frame-works--has led us to develop certain expectations in communications. When, as sometimes happens, these relational expectations are not met, ambiguity and confusion develop. We cannot decode these communications using the normative processes of contextuality and inferentiality. When this occurs, language is operating in what we shall call the **associative mode.**

If we accept as a priori that this mode of communication--like those operating literally and figuratively--has its origin in perceptions of reality,[105]

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[104](cont'd) Aguilar, 1957), pp. 381-85.

[105] Convincing arguments for this belief are put forward by Mike and Nancy Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye (New York: Random House, 1975); and by Bob Samples in The Metamorphic Mind (California: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.,

we may assume that while the reality remains the same, the perception of this reality has changed. The new perception cannot be expressed or understood within the limits of standard language (literal and figurative modes), since these modalities have developed under the exegesis of analytic (left hemisphere) perception and ideation. Many researchers believe that the altered perceptions which are evidenced in associative language are the result of a decrease in analytic (left brain) activity.[106] This decrease allows the right hemisphere's more holistic perceptual mode to participate to a greater extent than usual. Studies indicate that "the right hemisphere is a very highly developed brain except that it cannot express itself in language, so that it is not able to disclose any experience of consciousness that we can recognize."[107] However, because it is the left hemisphere which has the capability to link words together in semantically and syntactically acceptable ways, when the right hemisphere is dominant, the communications are often non-discursive. Indeed, the primary role played by language in this mode appears to be to de-automatize thought.

The contradictions inherent in communications which are right brain dominant cannot be resolved through either

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[105](cont'd) 1976).

[106]This subject is discussed by Sally Springer and Georg Deutsch, Left Brain, Right Brain (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1981), pp. 74, 86-95, 195-197.

[107]John C. Eccles, The Understanding of the Brain (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973), p. 213.

contextual, or inferential readings. We are then left with two choices: the first is to attempt to defuse the contradictions in the imagery by instituting a decoding process using **indirect derivatives** or, in other words, by **free association**, and the second is to try to visualize the contradictory signs **homospatially** (simultaneously).

After this brief examination of language processes, the questions now confronting us are what types of images exist, how are they communicated within the three language modalities, and how do these images appear in poetry? Finally, we will examine to what extent altered modalities are the reflection of reductions in left hemisphere perceptual modes, for imagery, like language, is not only expression, but also evidence of perception. Ulrich Neisser argues that the theory of imagery should be embedded in a general theory of perception.[108]

Imagery is basically a frame which we can understand, to a greater or lesser extent, because it offers new expressions of normative perceptions which our mental frameworks can accomodate. One could, perhaps, offer the suggestion that the conflict--which is inherent in imagery communicating figuratively because of the attempt to join semantically antagonistic signs--is resolved because of the ability of inferential processes to accomodate previously unknown or unrecognized analogies and conceptions into our linguistic frame-work. However, these new conceptions must maintain a connection with reality which is amenable to logical analysis.

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[108] Ulrich Neisser, *Cognition and Reality: Principles and Implication of Cognitive Psychology* (San Francisco: Freeman, 1976.

Sometimes imagery becomes the expression of altered perceptual modes, as in dream states or drug induced experiences. Often the communications expressed during these periods fall outside of previous mental constructs. There are nine major imagery types which have been identified in literature, some of which are expressions of normative perceptions, and others which attempt to communicate altered perceptual modalities.

1. *Memory Imagery*. Pablo Neruda discussed memory imagery in his autobiography:

> Las memorias del memorialista no son las memorias del poeta. Aquél vivió tal vez menos, pero fotografió mucho más y nos recrea con pulcritud de los detalles. Éste nos entrega una galería de fantasmas sacudidos por el fuego y la sombra de su época.[109]

Memory imagery is probably the most common type of imagery, and people generally refer to it as forming a mental picture. For example, a person may think of a friend and form a visualization of him/her. The memory image is usually, but not always a visual image. Mardi Horowitz, a research psychologist, defines a memory image as a "reconstruction or resurrection of a past perception,"[110] which is usually "linked to particular events or occasions having a personal reference."[111] They are concerned with things or events which actually have existed, and they can be summoned or dismissed at will. Memory imagery is dependent upon normative perception, and can be expressed in a combination of literal and figurative modes. Because it is concerned with normative perceptions, and amiable to contextual and inferential readings, we know that these communications are left hemisphere dominant and fully discursive. Neruda's autobiography is highly dependent upon visual memory images:

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[109] Pablo Neruda, *Confieso que he vivido* (Barcelona: Editorial Seis Barral, 1974), p. 9.

[110] M. Horowitz, *Image Formation and Cognition* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts Publ. Co., 1970), p. 22.

> Comenzaré por decir, sobre los días y años de mi infancia, que mi único personaje inolvidable fue la lluvia. La gran lluvia austral que cae como una catarata del Polo, desde los cielos del Cabo de Hornos hasta la frontera. En esta frontera, o Far West de mi patria, nací a la vida, a la tierra, a la poesía y a la lluvia.[112]

2. Imagination Imagery. This imagery type is credited with being the basis for much creative endeavour:

> Far from being whimsical or unimportant, this kind of visualization is the stuff of which creativity is made. Imagination images are the source of solutions to problems. Writers often visualize their characters acting out scenes. Painters see visual images, architects envision buildings, mathematicians see pictures of geometric shapes and surfaces. These visualizations are the basis of new work for the creative person.[113]

These images contain elements of past perceptions arranged in a different way than they were originally perceived, combined with logically possible projections. A continuum exists among imagination images from those which rely heavily on past perceptions to those which are made from recent perceptions or feasible projections. Through imagination a person can create images which do not exist in reality, but which could have existed in the past, or which could exist in the future. They are "substantial, vividly colored...and involve concentrated and quasi-hypnotic attention with inhibition of associations."[114]

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[111] Horowitz, *Image Formation*, p.93.

[112] Neruda, *Confieso*, p. 15.

[113] M. Samuels and Nancy Samuels, *Seeing with the Mind's Eye* (New York: Random House, 1975), p.46.

3. Fantasy Imagery. Fantasy images are made up from a combination of memory, imagination images, and logically impossible projections. They differ from previous imagenic forms in that they refer to experiences or states which could not have happened in the past, and which could not happen in the future. Because of the lack of verisimilitude, this imagery does not fulfill contextual demands. When using Figurative language in fantasy imagery, the writer often allows some ambiguity in the message transfer so that the reader may draw on his personal experience and interpretative abilities when reading. The amount of ambiguity varies widely. It may exert a very slight influence, or it may seem to be the governing feature of the imagery. However, a decoding can occur through the extended use of inferentiality. We know, therefore, that it is still under the influence of normative, discursive perceptions, or left hemisphere activity.

4. Hypnagogic and Hypnopompic Images: This imagery

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[114] A. Richardson, Mental Imagery (New York: Springer Publ. Co., 1969), p. 94.

experience occurs in the twilight state between sleeping and waking. It is called hypnagogic when it occurs preceding sleep and hypnopompic when it occurs just after sleep. These images tend to be "vivid, detailed and beyond the reach of conscious control."[115] Stephen Spender describes the experience:

> Sometimes, when I lie in a state of half-waking half-sleeping, I am conscious of a stream of words which seem to pass through my mind, without their having a meaning, but they have a sound, a sound of passion, or a sound recalling poetry that I know. Again sometimes when I am writing, the music of the words I am trying to shape takes me far beyond the words, I am aware of a rhythm, a dance, a fury, which is as yet empty of words.[116]

5. Dream Imagery: In dream imagery the familiar, the unfamiliar, people, places, objects and events are all mixed together. Dream imagery, like that of hypnagogic imagery, contains varying amounts of past perceptions (memory images) and imagination images. While dreams are experienced predominantly in visual images, they may contain elements of any other sensory modality. However, unlike in daydream imagery, in dream imagery the subject feels as if he has little or no control over the images. When speaking of dreams, Samuels says:

> Dreams break all the laws of causality, of time and space chronology, of rational thought. A dreamer can fly through the air unaided, be a child one second and an adult the next, travel thousands of miles in a moment, all with no break in the dream's inner

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[115] Samuels, Seeing, p. 46.

[116] Stephen Spender, "The Making of a Poem," P.E. Vernon, ed., Creativity (1970; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982), p. 75.

logic.[117]

In his extensive study, *A Grammar of Dreams*, David Foulkes argues that dreaming actually has its own unique language,[118] which is basically photographic, or pictorial in nature.[119] This imagery experience, unlike that of memory, imagination, and fantasy, is beyond the control of the individual. He cannot initiate it, control its content, or dismiss it.

When the subject attempts to describe the dream, the communication often is incomprehensible in that it does not conform to our established frameworks of expectations. Therefore, it cannot be decoded contextually or inferentially, and is right hemisphere dominant.

6. *Hallucination/Illusion Imagery*: This imagery is relatively rare, but on the occasions when it does appear, it is extremely vivid. When occuring in a waking state it is is like dream imagery in the sense that the individual has virtually no control over the appearance, content or dismissal. This imagery differs from the rest with regard to what the person believes the source of the imagery to be. In hallucinatory or delusional states the individual believes that the source of the imagery is external to himself.

Examples of true hallucinatory imagery are limited almost exclusively to psychiatric journals and reviews.

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[117] Samuels, *Seeing*, p. 46.

[118] David Foulkes, *A Grammar of Dreams* (Sussex: Harvester Press Ltd., 1978), p. 13.

[119] Foulkes, *A Grammar*, p. 17.

While research studies into the relationships and correlations between creativity and insanity are fascinating in themselves the collected data (much of which is more anecdotal than academic,) has not yet determined what part, if any, mental illness plays in creative processes. Until these possible connections are more fully explored and documented, such imagery should remain in the sole province of psychological sciences.[120]

7. Automatic Imagery: These are images produced by automatic means--automatic drawing and automatic writing. Automatic production is both a technique and an imagenic type, best known for its evident semantic incompatibilities. This imagery is not truly the result of a complete creative process. Rather it is the literary manifestation of a part of this process. Images based in this mode are not, in themselves, useful as viable communicative forms, since they can never be used to transfer an idea to a collective body of people.

8. Homospatial Imagery: Finally we come to the homospatial image, which was crucial to the surrealists, but which was not explicitly known about until the 1960's. The process used to produce this imagery consists of perceiving "two or more discrete entities occupying the same space, a conception leading to the articulation of new

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[120] Frightening examples of the anguish mental patients endure when hallucinating, can be found in James Fadman and Donald Kewman, Exploring Madness: Experience, Theory, and Research (Monterrey: Brooks/Cole Publishing, Co., 1973).

identities."[121] In essence, separate entities, which can be derived from any sensory modality or any combination of modalities, are brought into the same spacial location. In this process of superimposition new relationships result by the active integration of the different images.[122] They describe the process of homospatial perception:

> It is the interaction of fused or superimposed images in a mental construct that could never exist in physical space leads to creative and integrative ideas and structures.[123]

Although little is known about this imagery, one could offer the hypothesis that while the language is non-discursive in that it cannot be decoded contextually or inferentially, it still communicates literally. Unlike analogical thinking the homospatial process does not involve attibute-by-attribute comparison, but rather entities that occupy the same space in a mental construct or image. Homospatial imagery is, therefore, right hemisphere dominant.

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[121] Albert Rothenberg, and Robert Sobel, "Creation of Literary Metaphors as Stimulated by Superimposed Versus Separated Visual Images," Journal of Mental Imagery, 1980, 4, p. 77.

[122] Rothenberg and Sobel, p. 78.

[123] Rothenberg, p. 79.

IV. The Romantics

Criticism has often suggested that the last stage in the evolution of Romanticism was the dinosaur Surrealism. André Breton himself acknowledged a link with the Romantics when he admitted that Surrealism could be called the tail-end of Romanticism, although he did qualify his admission by adding "mais alors la queue tellement préhensile . . ."[124] Consequently, this historical examination of imagery takes, as its point of departure, the images of the Romantics. The purpose of this examination is not to provide a detailed analysis of individual poets' imagery, nor to give an exhaustive study of Romanticism. Rather, our methodology involves a search for general tendencies which characterize the images of the various literary movements, since engaging in detailed explications de textes of individual writers would, when we reach surreal imagery, leave us in the position of not being able to see the forest for the trees. We would, in essence, be committing the same error as many previous critics have done: we would trace the poetic development of writers who had participated in Surrealism, before first defining the imagenic characteristics of the movement, before first determining what literary Surrealism is. The historical study shall, therefore, concentrate on what one might call the "macro-features" of imagery, which are the language modalities used in imagenic communications, and the type of imagery involved (i.e. imagination, fantasy, etc.). From this data, we should be able to ascertain the perceptual modalities involved in the creation of the imagery, and whether it is under right or left hemispheric domination.[125]

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[124] André Breton, Manifestes du surréalisme (1930; rpt. Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1972), p. 110.

The first poet whose imagery will be examined is Alphonse-Marie-Louis Lamartine (1790-1869). His work, perhaps more than that of any other French poet, epitomizes the Romantics' artistic sentiments, and interestingly while Lamartine was a leading exponent of Romanticism, he has also been praised by the surrealists, who were certainly not strong advocates of romantic poetic practices. This unusual admiration may, in part, be due to Lamartine's early notice of certain communicative concerns which were later voiced by the surrealists--especially by André Breton. For example, although critics agree that Lamartine's language, "ne brise rien, n'exerce sur ses lecteurs aucune violence, ne cherche aucunement à les dérouter,"[126] he was, at the same time, dissatisfied with the limitations of this language:

> Il se plaint de la pauvreté du vocabulaire, si rétréci et desséché par la raison et l'analyse; il lit avidement les oeuvres où les émotions de l'âme s'expriment par des formes fraîches et magnifiques.[127]

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[125] When general critical evaluations will help us to understand why certain poets were chosen, or when critical statements situate the poet's place in literary history, I often have recourse to the invaluable book Le Dynamisme de l'image by Marc Eigeldinger, whose extensive studies have greatly helped to illuminate imagery, particularily as it developed in the French tradition.

[126] Henri Guillemin, Lamartine: l'homme et l'oeuvre (Paris: Boivan et Cie, 1940), p. 17.

[127] Ernest Zyromski, Larmartine: poète lyrique (Paris:

Although Lamartine never attempted to surrender himself totally to the dictates of the Bretonian "unconscious," his poetry sometimes contains images which suggest the existence of an altered perceptual mode.

In addition, the freshness of his metaphoric expression indicates another element he has in common with the surrealists who were to follow a century later. They both offer the reader previously unperceived and unexpressed metaphors. However, despite the elements of novelty offered by these unusual perceptions--perceptions which could have interfered with discursive communication--Lamartine's imagery is characterized by its fluidity:

> Tous les phénomènes qu'offrent la fluidité, aisance, transparence, reflets de ciel, murmures harmonieux, défaut de saveur peut-être, manque de limites et de formes arrêtées, fugitive inconsistance, tous ces caractères de la fluidité se confondent avec les attributs de l'imagination lamartinienne.[128]

Ernest Zyromski discusses various perceptual factors--specifically those of memory and dream--which contribute to the development of Lamartine's imagery:

> Toutes ces images qui surgissaient devant lui en contemplant la nature, ou en écoutant les poètes, il les garda dans sa mémoire, non pas certes par un travail méthodique et avec des préoccupations littéraires, mais par une assimilation spontanée et avec l'instinct rapide et sûr où se manifeste un besoin de sa vie intérieure. Et ainsi, il s'est composé un monde où ses rêveries le transportaient sans cesse, un monde formé de paysages, de décors somptueux, d'avenues féeriques ou vaporeuses, un mode à la fois vague et riche, dont les perspectives changeantes se transformaient au gré de son

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[127](cont'd) Armand Colin et Cie, 1897), p. 291.

[128]C. de Pomairols, Lamartine (France: Gallimard, 1889), p. 119.

> inspiration et lui présentaient pour l'expression de ses sentiments un cadre, des métaphores, des comparaisons, tous les symboles de l'art où s'agrandit et s'idéalise la matière de nos rêves.[12]'

Our historical examination commences with images drawn from his collection entitled *Premières méditations poétiques*, which the poet opens with the text "L'Isolement:"

> Souvent sur la montagne, à l'ombre du vieux chêne,
> Au coucher du soleil, tristement je m'assieds;
> Je promène au hasard mes regards sur la plaine,
> Dont le tableau changeant se déroule à mes pieds.
>
> Ici gronde le fleuve aux vagues écumantes;
> Il serpente, et s'enfance en un lointain obscur;
> Là le lac immobile étend ses eaux dormantes
> Où l'étoile du soir se lève dans l'azur.
>
> Au somment de ces monts couronnés de bois sombres,
> Le crépuscule encor jette un dernier rayon;
> Et le char vaporeux de la reine des ombres
> Monte, et blanchit déjà les bords de l'horizon.
>
> Cependant, s'élançant de la flèche gothique,
> Un son religieux se répand dans les airs:
> Le voyageur s'arrête, et la cloche rustique
> Aux derniers bruits du jour mêle de saints concerts.
>
> Mais à ces doux tableaux mon âme indifférent
> N'éprouve devant eux ni charme ni transports;
> Je contemple la terre ainsi qu'une ombre errante:
> Le soleil des vivants n'échauffe plus les morts.
>
> De colline en colline ennvain portant ma vue,
> Du sud à l'aquilon, de l'aurore au couchant,
> Je parcours tous les points de l'immense étendue,
> Et je dis: "Nulle part le bonheur ne m'attend."
>
> Que me font ces vallons, ces palais, ces chaumières,
> Vains objets dont pour moi le charme est envolé?
> Fleuves, rochers, forêts, solitudes si chères,
> Un seul être vous manque, et tout est dépeuple!
>
> Que le tour de soleil ou commence ou s'achève
> D'un oeil indifférent je le suis dans son cours;
> En un ciel sombre ou pur qu'il se couche ou se lève
> Qu'importe le soleil? je n'attends rien des jours.

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[12] 'Ernest Zyromski, *Lamartine: poète lyrique* (Paris: Armand Colin et Cie, 1897), pp. 293-94.

Quand je pourrais le suivre en sa vaste carrière,
Mes yeux verraient partout le vide et les déserts:
Je ne désire rien de tout ce qu'il éclaire;
Je ne demande rien à l'immense univers.

Mais peut-être au delà des bornes de sa sphère,
Lieux où le vrai soleil éclaire d'autres cieux,
Si je pouvais laisser ma dépouille à la terre,
Ce que j'ai tant rêvé paraîtrait à mes yeux!

Là, je m'enivreais à la source où j'aspire;
Là, je retrouverais et l'espoir et l'amour,
Et ce bien idéal que toute âme désire,
Et qui n'a pas de nom au terrestre séjour!

Que ne puis-je, porté sur le char de l'Aurore,
Vague objet de mes voeux, m'élancer jusqu'à toi!
Sur la terre d'exil pourquoi restè-je encore?
Il n'est rien de commun entre la terre et moi.

Quand la feuille des bois tombe dans la prairie,
Le vent du soir s'élève et l'arrache aux vallons;
Et moi, je suis semblable à la feuille flétrie:
Emportez-moi comme elle, orageux aquilons![138]

The majority of images in this poem are amenable to contextual reading, which indicates that the language modality being used is the literal. Since all of the images may be decoded without reference to inferentiality, this stanza evidences imagination imagery, which must, by definition, be in accordance with normative--left hemisphere dominant--perception and expression.

The reader's reception of perceptions which are formed from imagery that communicates literally is governed almost exclusively by the poet. The reader is linguistically directed to envision people, places, or events with precision, and therefore his interpretations manifest a high degree of conformity. When imagenic message transfers evidence this conformity they are, necessarily, discursive.

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[138] Alphonse de Lamartine, Premières méditations, pp. 3-5.

Another example of the strong role which memory plays in imagination imagery in Lamartine's art is found in "Le Soir." This poem was, Lamartine tells us, composed from his memories of a time which he spent at his uncle's country home.[131] This information tends partially to support Eigeldinger's claim that, while no-one can dispute the originality of his imagery, the images themselves always remain "associées au souvenir à la reviviscence d'une émotion ou d'un sentiment."[132] It also further justifies Zyromski's emphasis on the importance of memory in Lamartine's art when he asserts that "le souvenir est le grand évocateur des images.[133] He expounds upon this statement when he explains the role of memory in Lamartine's poetics:

> Ces images qui vivent dans les profondeurs où elles sont deposées, s'attirent les unes les autres par l'effet de combinaisons à la fois habiles et inconscientes. Il se produit des associations d'images amenées avec la souplesse des opérations spontanées.[134]

Let us now briefly examine the first stanza of "Le Soir."

> Le soir ramène le silence.
> Assis sur ces rochers déserts,
> Je suis dans le vague des airs
> Le char de la nuit qui s'avance. s'avance.[135]

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[131] Lamartine, Premières, p. 28.

[132] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 38.

[133] Zyromski, Lamartine: poète lyrique, p. 301.

[134] Zyromski, Lamartine: poète lyrique, p. 298.

[135] Lamartine, Premières méditations pp. 27-9.

The communicative modalities in the first stanza are typical of most others which compose the text. The first image "Le soir ramène le silence" operates in the figurative modality which we can decode through a combination of contextuality and inferentiality. These processes result in a general reading of "with the coming of evening, there is silence." The second image "Assis sur ces rochers déserts" communicates literally, and can therefore be read contextually. The third and fourth images "Je suis dans le vague des airs/Le char de la nuit qui s'avance," communicate through a combination of the literal and the figurative. They can, therefore, be decoded through contextual and inferential readings. The stanza is an example of imagination imagery.

The language modes present in this stanza combined with the fact that the images can be decoded through the processes of contextuality and inferentiality, indicate that the imagery communication is dependent upon normative perception and expression, making it left hemisphere dominant.

The last example of Lamartine's imagery to be dealt with in our discussion comes from "Le Lac," a poem which is, quite possibly, the most widely known lyric text of the French Romantic movement.

> Ainsi, toujours poussés vers de nouveaux rivages,
> Dans la nuit éternelle emportés sans retour,
> Ne pourrons-nous jamais sur l'océan des âges
> Jeter l'ancre un seul jour?
>
> O lac! l'année à peine a fini sa carrière,

Et près des flot chéris qu'elle devait revoir,
Regarde! je viens seul m'assesoir sur cette pierre
Où tu la vis s'asseoir!

Tu mugissais ainsi sous ces roches profondes,
Ainsi tu te brisais sur leurs flancs déchirés,
Ainsi le vent jetait l'écume de tes ondes
Sur ses pieds adorés.[134]

The first image "Ainsi toujours poussés vers de nouveaux rivages" is somewhat ambiguous since the reader is not told to whom or to what the poet is referring. However, despite the questions raised by ambiguity, the image communicates literally and can be decoded contextually. In the next image "Dans la nuit éternelle emportés sans retour," the ambiguity increases for two reasons. The first is that the poet still has not revealed the identity of the subject to whom his discourse is directed. The second results from a change in the communicative modality with the words "nuit éternelle." Although the image still transfers its message contextually, the reader is likely to interpret the adjective "éternelle" figuratively.

The third and fourth lines "Ne pourrons-nous jamais sur l'océan des âges/Jeter l'ancre un seul jour," develop the analogy between an ocean voyage and man's passage on earth. They continue to communicate primarily through the figurative mode, but they can be decoded through contextuality. At the same time, however, the images encourage the reader to employ inferential processes in order to develop a figurative interpretation. Since the images can communicate a message both literally and figuratively, they may be classified as heterogeneous images. They conform to the demands of imagination imagery, which is based on previous perceptions or memory.

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[134] A. Lamartine, Premières méditations poétiques (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1924), pp. 76-9. Only the first three stanzas are included here.

The imagery in the second stanza communicates in the literal mode, must be decoded contextually, belongs exclusively to the category of imagination imagery, and is clearly discursive. The combination of these characteristics shows that its creation and interpretation are governed by the analytic processes of the dominant left hemisphere.

The third stanza, while communicating literally, and being subject therefore to contextual interpretations does, nonetheless, manifest figurative elements as, for example, with the personification of lake.

The imagenic modality found in the poem is that of imagination which is compatible with normative perception. This indicates that they are, once again, under the dominance of the left hemisphere, and that they should offer the reader a highly discursive imagenic communication.

As we have seen, although figurative communications are found in Lamartine's work, and this results in images which are often more evocative than descriptive,[137] the poet's imagination is still clearly dominated by the analytic mind. For him the image remains an adornment and it "prend rarement une valeur indépendante."[138]

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[137] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 38.

[138] E. Zyromsky, Lamartine, poète lyrique (France: Gallimard, 1897), p. 299.

Victor Hugo, another Romantic poet, is an artist who, according to critical opinion, had a great influence on the development of French poetry.

> Since Hugo, French poetry has been more concerned with seeing than with thinking, and in general it has aimed at provoking an imaginative rather than an intellectual response.[139]

The usually intractable Breton was also strongly attracted by Hugo's works, and with Breton's well publicized predilection for language and imagery issues, it should not be unreasonable to assume that the key to this attraction is, most likely, to be found in this poet's imagery.

Hugo, like Lamartine who came before him, and the surrealists who came after, strongly believed in the importance of imaginative activity in the creative endeavour. Indeed, Hugo considered the imagination to be "le plus puissant instrument d'investigation poétique, elle découvre, crée, invente, affirmie par les données de l'intuition."[140] The critical emphasis on the imaginative component of his art is partially due to the poet's belief that analytic thought processes and precision in communication contributed very little to the actual creation or impact of imagery. For Hugo, "la poésie consiste avant tout en suggestions et en évocations."[141]

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[139] Peter Broome and Graham Chesters, The Appreciation of Modern French Poetry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 39.

[140] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, pp. 78-9.

[141] Maurice Grammont, Essai de psychologie linguistique (Paris: Librairie Delagrave, 1950), p. 15.

Perception plays a large role in Hugo's poetry and literary critic Léopold Mabilleau succinctly assesses Hugo's imagination with reference to his perceptual mode:

> Elle est une impressionnabilité toujours éveillée aux spectacles changeants du monde, une perception rapide et intense des formes expressives, une collaboration de l'esprit à la vision, qui fait jaillir une image là où il n'avait qu'une apparence matérielle, qui, d'une rencontre de couleurs et de lignes, tire de la pensée et de l'emotion, qui enfin interprète toute sensation et symbolise toute figure.[142]

The same critic later describes how this perception affects his imagery:

> Les contours réels s'évaporent en silhouettes fantastiques; la sensation primitive est amplifiée, disloquée, corrigée avant de pouvoir se formuler. L'oeil n'est plus un miroir exact, mais une lentille grossissante et déformante: ce n'est plus un appareil de perception, mais un instrument d'imagination.[143]

Marc Eigeldinger also draws attention to the poet's powers of vision when he comments that in Hugo's imagery "la perception hallucinée se substitue peu à peu aux qualités d'observations et la description, l'évocation du concret cèdent à la représentation visionnaire."[144] Indeed, one could argue that Victor Hugo's adaptations of perceptual modes constitute his "imagination"--a view which is supported by one critic's evaluation that Victor Hugo "n'a rien inventé; il combine, il arrange."[145]

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[142] Leopold Mabilleau, Victor Hugo (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie, 1907), p. 31.

[143] Mabilleau, Victor Hugo, p. 131.

[144] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 105.

[145] Maurice Grammont, Essai de psychologie linguistique

Also interesting in light of Breton's mention of Hugo as a precursor of Surrealism,[146] is Eigeldinger's notice of the apparent influence of automatism in Hugo's works:

> "Il cède à une sorte d'automatisme incontrôlé, il se laisse griser par la vertu des mots, un peu comme les surréalistes s'abandonnent à la dictée de leur inconscient."[147]

Let us pause now and examine several samples of Victor Hugo's imagery to determine language modalities involved, the prevailing imagenic types in his texts, and the extent to which these are governed by left or right hemispheric perceptual modalities. The poems I have selected for this discussion are "Demain, dès l'aube," from Les Contemplations, and "L'Enfant," from Les Orientales.

Demain, dès l'aube, à l'heure où blanchit la campagne,
Je partirai. Vois-tu, je sais que tu m'attends.
J'irai par la forêt, j'irai par la montagne.
Je ne puis demeurer loin de toi plus longtemps.

Je marcherai les yeux fixés sur mes pensées,
Sans rien voir au dehors, sans entendre aucun bruit,
Seul, inconnu, le dos courbé, les mains croisées,
Triste, et le jour pour moi sera comme la nuit.

Je ne regarderai ni l'or du soir qui tombe,
Ni les voiles au loin descendant vers Harfleur,
Et quand j'arriverai, je mettrai sur la tombe
Un bouquet de houx vert et de bruyère en fleur.[148]

The language in the above poem operates in the literal modality. Thus, the communication consistently fulfills the

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[145] (cont'd) (Paris: Librairie Delagrave, 1950), p. 16.

[146] André Breton, Manifestes du surréalisme (1924; rpt. Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1972), p. 212.

[147] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 82.

[148] Victor Hugo, Les Contemplations (1856; rpt. Paris: Editions Rencontre, 1968), p. 194.

requirements of contextuality with the exception of two instances where the modality switches from the literal to the figurative, and thus must be decoded inferentially. These are found in the images "Je marcherai les yeux fixés sur mes pensées," and "Je ne regarderai ni l'or du soir qui tombe," wherein the reader must infer, from relational experience, that eyes being fixed upon his thoughts is a metaphor for inner reflections and that Hugo is using gold as a metaphor for sunset. Although these images are relatively simple examples of symbolic imagery, they are representative of an imagenic type which becomes increasingly more prevalent in later literary history.

We should, perhaps, note that the ease with which the decoding process is accomplished in figurative communications. This is largely because this imagery is solidly embedded among purely literal imagery which is amenable to contextual readings.

Clearly, the imagery in this poetry finds its source in memory or past perceptions--as do virtually all types of images--but because Hugo chose both to introduce elements of figurative language, and to treat his subject of presentation figuratively rather than literally, the reader realizes that the imagenic type involved is that of imagination.

Since all of the information transfered in the imagery can be comprehended through the employment of rational thought process, the imagery is highly discursive. Thus, the assumption can be made that both the creation, and the subsequent reception of this imagery occurs under the guidance of left hemisphere and reflects this hemisphere's perceptual proclivities.

Let us now analyze Hugo's communicative arts as they appear in "L'Enfant."

Les turcs ont passé là. Tout est ruine et deuil
Chio, l'île des vins, n'est plus qu'un sombre écueil,
Chio qu'ombrageaient les charmilles,
Chio, qui dans les flots reflétait ses grands bois,
Ses coteaux, ses palais, et le soir quelquefois.
Un coeur dansant de jeunes filles.

Tout est désert. Mai non; seul près des murs noircis,
Un enfant aux yeux bleus, un enfant grec, assis,
Courbait sa tête humiliée,
Il avait pour asile, il avait pour appui
Une blanche aubépine, une fleur, comme lui
Dans le grande ravage oublie.

Ah! pauvre enfant, pieds nus sur les rocs anguleux!
Hélas pour essuyer les pleurs de tes yeux bleus
Comme le ciel et comme l'onde,
Pour que dans leur azur, des larmes orageux,
Passe le vif éclair de la joie et des jeux,
Pour relever ta tête blonde.

Que veux-tu? Bel enfant, que te faut-il donner
Pour rattacher gaîment et gaîment ramener
En boucles sur ta blanche épaule
Ces cheveux, qui du fer n'ont pas subi l'affront,
Et qui pleurent épars autour de ton beau front,
Comme les feuilles sur le saule?

Qui pourrait dissiper tes chagrins nébuleux?
Est-ce d'avoir ce lys, bleu comme tes yeux bleus,
Qui d'Iran borde le puits sombre?
Ou le fruit du tuba, de cet arbre si grand
Qu'un cheval au galop met, toujours en courant,
Cent ans à sortir de son ombre?

Veux-tu, pour me sourire, un bel oiseau de bois
Qui change avec un chant plus doux que le hautbois
Plus éclatant que les cymbales?
Que veux-tu? fleur, beau fruit, ou l'oiseau merveilleux?

> --Ami, dit l'enfant grec, dit l'enfant aux yeux
> bleus
> Je veux de la poudre et des balles.'[149]

Stated briefly, this poem presents a historical scene from the Greek War of Independence. The imagery in "L'Enfant" can be understood contextually, which indicates that the dominant communicative modality is that of the literal. Since this does, in turn, suggest that the message transfers will be understood by the majority of readers, with very few individual differences, the imagery is contextually discursive.

The actual narrative[150] is clearly and logically related to a particular time and place, thus indicating, once again, the strong influence which memory may have on the formation of imagination imagery.

The last French Romantic poet to be examined is Gérard de Nerval. Although, curiously, Nerval's poetic tendencies should tend to define him more as a transition poet than as a Romantic, at least with regard to his perceptual strategies:

> Nerval n'était pas porté à extérioriser son âme et ses sentiments, il éprouvait déjà le discret besoin de voiler le lyrisme d'une ambiance de mystère en le retrempant à ses sources occultes. Il n'a jamais traité les thèmes favoris du romantisme français, le problème du pittoresque et de la couleur locale ne l'a jamais véritablement préocupé, parce qu'il est plus curieux des puissances secrètes de l'être que

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[149] Victor Hugo, Odes et ballades; Les Orientales (1829; rpt. Paris: Editions Rencontre, 1968), pp. 362-3.

[150] For the purposes of our discussion narrative will be read as a synonym for message transfer.

du spectacle de la nature.'[51]

Nerval may well have been admired by the surrealists for the altered perceptual modalities which characterize much of his work, since Surrealism is largely based on the attempt to discover new ways of "seeing" or perceiving. Unfortunately, in the case of Gérard de Nerval, the appearance of these altered perceptions was not always under the poet's control. Anna Balakian comments on Nerval's perceptual deviations:

> Another of Nerval's illusions which will later be utilized is that of finding oneself exteriorized and forming part of the new perspective. It is with fright that Nerval appears before his own eyes distorted by his hallucination: "O terreur! ô colère! c'était mon visage, c'était toute ma forme idealisée et grandie."[52]

In a discussion of possible affinities between Nerval and the French surrealists, Balakian emphasizes that "this type of exteriorization will contribute considerably to the general distortion of perspective which will be attempted by the seekers of surreality."[53]

Nerval had another interest which links him with Surrealism, for he, like later poets, was intrigued by the secret insights sometimes afforded by dreams:

> Le rêve est pour Nerval un moyen de conaissance, une source d'investigation qui permet de remonter au principe même de l'existence et qui apporte au poète la révélation de la vie surnaturelle. Il est une sorte de communication intuitive avec le mystère de

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[51] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 54.

[52] Anna Balakian, Literary Origins of Surrealism (King's Crown Press, 1947), p. 35.

[53] Balakian, Literary Origins, p. 37.

> l'au-delà. Le rêve de Nerval présente une grande cohérence, une logique fondamentale, il s'agit pour le poète de conquérir le vide et de dissiper la nuit.[154]

First Nerval, and later the surrealists essayed to exploit the hidden resources of dreams, which as we now know often reflect increased activity in the right cerebral hemisphere. Yet Balakian, in a discussion on Nerval, draws careful attention to the more analytic or rational aspects of the poet's perceptual modes (in this case normative or discursive memory activity), for according to Nerval himself, his poetic world was "mêlée de souvenirs d'études et de fragments de songes."[155] Nerval, unlike the surrealists, was not willing to abandon himself totally to the forces of the dream world, nor did he choose to render his poetry subservient to the exploration of this nether-world:

> Nerval n'endort pas sa conscience, il l'éveille; il n'écrit pas sous la dictée incoherente des puissances obscures, il édifie son rêve et ne le lâche pas avant d'en avoir epuisé le sens.[156]

Marc Eigeldinger introduces a critically important aspect of Nerval's poetry, when he remarks that the imagery not only reflects an "internal" reality, but that it also indicates the existence of an "external" reality (or aspects of an external reality) of which we are, at best, only partially aware:

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[154] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 55.

[155] Gérard de Nerval, Aurélia (Paris: Victor Lecou, 1855; Paris: Le Divan, 1928), p. 39.

[156] K. Haedens, Gérard Nerval ou la sagesse romantique (Paris: Editions Bernard Grasset, 1939), p. 117.

> Les images de Nerval ne sont pas seulement le reflet de la vie intérieure, elles attestent déjà la présence de cette réalité obscure, infinie que les poètes symbolistes rêveront d'appréhender par l'art de la suggestion et le pouvoir investigateur de l'imagination.[157]

With the words "pouvoir investigateur de l'imagination," Eigeldinger points out the often unrecognized investigative and exploratory nature of imaginative activity--attributes which once led Nerval to call the imagination "la reine des facultés."

Interestingly, Nerval's views concerning the actual composition and function of the imagination parallel those of many modern researchers engaged in studies on creativity and cerebral activity. In the last few decades, there has been a marked decrease in the tendency to associate imagination with an intangible, ephemeral, or even a mystical event, and an substantial increase in the number of specialists who associate imaginative activity with the ability to perceive already existing relationships in a new way.[158] Nerval summarizes his thoughts on the imagination when he states that "Je crois que l'imagination humaine n'a rien inventé qui ne soit vrai dans ce monde ou dans les autres, et je ne pouvais douter de ce que j'avais vu si distinctement."[159]

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[157] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 61.

[158] Nancy and Mike Samuels, Seeing with the Mind's Eye, pp. 39-50. Certain theorists believe that imagination is actually the ability to view the world from a different perspective.

The imagery resulting from Nerval's blending of dream with almost hallucinatory perceptions has earned him a unique position in the evolution of French poetry. From his many works, perhaps the best known is the famous "El Desdichado,"[160] a text which offers a haunting combination of personal allusions, classical references, and gliding transitional sonorities. Yet, despite the hermeticism and the apparent obscurity of the complex imagery, critics find that "El Desdichado" retains a decided degree of discursivity:

> Dans "El Desdichado," chef d'oeuvre poétique, la symbolique de l'astrologie se superimpose pour une part à celle de l'alchimie et aux grandes images du Tarot. Mais l'ensemble garde un sens cohérent.[161]

Once again, it is time to turn our attention towards the language modalities, the imagenic types, and the perceptual modalities expressed in the creative text.

> Je suis le ténébreux,--le veuf,--l'inconsolé,
> Le prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie:
> Ma seule *étoile* est morte,--et mon luth constellé
> Porte le *soleil* noir de la *Mélancolie*.
>
> Dans la nuit du tombeau, toi qui m'as consolé,
> Rends-moi le Pausilippe et la mer d'Italie,
> La *fleur* qui plaisait tant à mon coeur désolé,
> Et la treille où le pampre à la rose s'allie.
>
> Suis je Amour ou Phébus?...Lusignan ou Biron?
> Mon front est rouge encore du baiser de la reine;

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[159] Gérard Nerval, quoted by Eigeldinger, in *Le Dynamisme*, p. 57.

[160] This poem was first entitled "Le Destin."

[161] Jean Richer, *Nerval: Expérience et création* (Paris: Hachette, 1963), p. 556.

J'ai rêvé dans la grotte où nage la sirène...

Et j'ai deux fois vainqueur traversé l'Achéron:
Modulant tour à tour sur la lyre d'Orphée
Les soupirs de la sainte et les cris de la fée.[162]

Readers immediately realize that the some of imagery in this poem is distinctly different from that which we have encountered previously. In this instance, the language no longer communicates a message either in the literal modality which can be satisfactorily decoded through contextual readings, or in the figurative modality which may be decoded through inferential processes. Instead, the figurative communicative mode operates symbolically as we see in images like "Ma seule étoile est morte," "le soleil noir," and "La fleur qui plaisait tant à mon coeur désolé." As before, the reader must employ inferential techniques, which means that he must enlarge his communicative framework in order to interpret the imagery. However, since symbolic elements now appear in the communication, there is a greater possibility of ambiguity entering into the message transfer. The element of ambiguity is present because Nerval chose to use certain personal rather than arbitrary phrases in his message transfer. This, of course, means a reduction in discursiveness, even though the reader can logically infer a "plausible" interpretation of the images.

The poet has recourse to both classical and personal mythologies. The former indicates the active role of imagination imagery in his text, while the latter is usually found in his fantasy images, particularly when this type of imagery involves a symbolic communicative mode. The unusual combination of memory with fantasy images implies a hitherto uncommon perceptual modality, but one which is, nonetheless, still largely amenable to analytical decoding processes, although the reader must be willing to to play a more active role in the interpretation.[143] While the reader knows that Nerval's presentation of events could not exist in reality, he can interpret the poet's intended message through sensitive inferential readings. The imagery is, therefore, still guided primarily by the left hemisphere, although the potential for the possibility of right hemisphere contribution cannot be totally ignored. For example, should the image "Ma seule *étoile* est morte,--et mon luth constellé/Porte le *soleil* noir de la *Mélancholie* have been found at the end of Breton's poem "Union libre," the reader would have encountered a great deal more difficulty in attempting to satisfactorily decode the messsage or recognize the perception.

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[162] Gerald de Nerval, Poésies (Originally published in 1854, France: Mermod, 1968), p. 27.

Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer is the last poet from the Romantic period whose imagery is to be examined. Although some critics contend that Espronceda is "indudablemente, la más grande figura del Romanticismo español,"[144] others believe that Bécquer is not only "el mejor representante"[165] of Spanish Romanticism, but that he is also "el mejor poeta del siglo XIX."[166] Other critics support their preference for Bécquer by noting that "he is perhaps the purest Romantic, for unlike Espronceda, he reveals no pose or showmanship in his sadness."[167] E. Peers suggests that some critics would describe him as being the "[f]irst truly great lyric poet Spain had known for two and a half centuries."[168] Bécquer's influence on the development of Spanish Modernism is, as José Varela notes, widely acknowledged:

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[143] The statement that the reader must play a more active role is intended to mean that greater intellectual exertion is required in the interpretation of Nerval's imagery than in that of Lamartine for example.

[144] J. García Mercadal, *Historia del Romanticismo en España* (Barcelona: Editorial Labor, S.A., 1943), p. 227.

> . . .no tiene el critico más remedio que partir de Bécquer, y eso tanto para la poesía de tendencia hermética y aislacionista como para la poesía comunicativa y comunitaria. Bécquer ha influido en Rosalía de Castro, Rubén Dario, Juan Ramón, Unamuno, Antonio Machado, Cerrère, Lorca, Alberti, Cernuda, Guillén, Salinas, Aleixandre, Gerardo Diego.[169]

In light of these critical evaluations, the assertion that Bécquer was the "punto de arranque" for all contemporary Spanish poetry is not surprising.[170]

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[165] G. Díaz-Plaja, Introductión al estudio del romanticismo español (Spain: Collección Austral, 1972), p. 40.

[166] José Varela, Literatura de España: Neoclasicismo y Romanticismo (Madrid: Editorial Nacional, 1972), p. 407.

[167] Richard E. Chandler and Kessel Schwartz, A New History of Spanish Literature (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1961), p. 352

[168] E. Peers, A Critical Anthology of Spanish Verse (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 560.

[169] Varela, Literatura de España, p. 408.

[170] Chandler and Schwartz, A New History, p. 354.

Bécquer's imagery diverged from that of traditional Spanish poetry. Indeed, critics often comment that "Bécquer was really the first to see the difference between the traditional, pompous, rhetorical Spanish poetry which had been written up to his time and the new style of short, unadorned, simple poetry."[171] The poet himself distinguishes between the two types:

> Hay una poesía magnifica y sonora; una poesía hija de la meditación y el arte, que se engalana con todas las pompas de nuestra lengua, que se mueve con una cadenciosa majestad, habla a la imaginación, completa sus cuadros y la conduce a su antojo por un sendero desconocido, seduciéndola con su armonía y su hermosura.
>
> Hay otra natural, breve, seca, que brota del alma como una chispa eléctrica,[172] que hiere el sentimiento con una palabra y huye; desnuda de todo artificio desembarazada dentro de una forma libre, despierta con una que las toca, las mil ideas que duermen en el océano sin fondo de la fantasía.
>
> La primera tiene un valor dado: es poesía de todo el mundo.
>
> La segunda carece de medida absoluta; adquiere las proporciones de la imaginación que impresiona: puede llamarse la poesía de los poetas.
>
> La primera es una melodía que nace, se desarrolla, acaba y se desvanece.
>
> La segunda es un acorde que se arranca de una arpa, y se quedan las cuerdas vibrándolo con un zumbido. Cuando se concluye aquella, se dobla la hoja con una suave sonrisa de satisfacción. Cuando se acaba ésta, se inclina la frente cargada de pensamientos sin nombre.[173]

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[171] Chandler and Schwartz, A New History, p. 354.

[172] Note the similarity between Bécquer's and Breton's analogy between imagery and electricity.

[173] Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, Obras completas, eds. Angeles Cardona de Gilbert, and don Juan Alcina Franch (Barcelona: Editorial Bruguera, S.A., 1970), p. 549.

Las Rimas, perhaps Béquer's most famous work, is a collection of lyric poetry, the texts of which are dominated by a mixture of sadness and tranquility. His thematic concerns, common to Romanticism, are the passage of time, the nearness of death, solitude, and love. In short, the collection "nos presenta con la historia de un corazón, la historia de una pasión amorosa, como eje central con algunos otros temas que se relacionan con éste, como la poesía, la religión, o la muerte."[174]

However, more important for the purposes of this discussion than the poet's Romantic tendencies are Bécquer's peripheral ties with future imagery, and particularily his appreciation of words' affective potential.[175] In his discussion of Bécquer's influence on modernism in Spain, Varela notes that Bécquer's poetry evidences "un gran esfuerzo de interiorización"[176], and that in his imagery "cada sustantivo diga lo que debe decir, pero que por sí mismo tenga la suficiente fuerza y flexibilidad para convertirse en símbolo."[177] Interestingly both Varela and Díaz-Plaja note features in Bécquer's imagery which were to become important to the Surrealists. Varela brings to our attention the fact that Bécquer often prefers "las frases con dos sustantivos unidos por una preposición."[178] By employing this technique, the poet created such images as "aura de aplausos," "nube de dolor," "dedos de rosa," "gasa de polvo dorado e inquieto," "pupilas de fuego," "lenguas de fuego," "penacho de plata," "jirones de vapor," "sábana de espumas," "trenzas de oro," "ojos de llamas," "rizada cinta de blanca espuma," and "arpo de oro."[179]

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[174] Varela, p. 411.

[175] Díaz-Plaja, pp. 78-80, and Chandler, p. 353.

[176] Varela, Literatura, p. 412.

[177] Varela, Literatura, p. 412.

Basically, the semantic antagonism found in these examples can be eliminated through the process of inferentiality. For example the dawn of applause = the breaking out of applause, the cloud of pain = the intangible feeling of mental suffering, eyes of fire = eyes that are flashing in anger, etc. Since, when decoded, the interpretation of these imagenic messages is fairly standard, they can be said to be discursive.

In addition, Díaz-Plaja observation that in the poet's images "sueño y mundo hallan por igual,"[180] indicates a confusion of the real and the irreal that intrigued the surrealists.

Let us now briefly examine Bécquer's creative texts themselves, for the dual purposes of classifying his imagery according to the criteria previously employed, and of attempting to uncover incipient imagenic characteristics which we may find were later appropriated by the poets active in Surrealism.

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[178] Varela, Literatura, p. 413.

[179] We should note that this structure was also popular with the surrealists, and that, at a later stage, we may find unexpected similarities between Bécquer's imagery and that produced by the surrealists.

[180] Díaz-Plaja, p. 366.

Our brief study opens with Poem IX of Rimas.

Besa el aura que gime blandamente
las leves ondas que jugando riza,
el sol besa a la nube en occidente y de púrpura y
oro la matiza,
la llama en derredor del tronco ardiente
por besar a otra llama se desliza
y hasta el sauce inclinádose a su peso
al río que le besa, vuelve un beso.[181]

The imagery in this poem shows a distinct reduction in discursiveness. For example, there is only one image "el sauce inclinandose a su peso" which can communicate in the literal as well as the figurative modality, or which can be understood contextually. The other images can only be decoded through inferential readings. Since after the decoding process, the message transfer presents situations which could not possibly occur in the literal world as we know it, the imagery is that of fantasy. However, despite the physical impossibility of, for example, the image "la llama en derredor del tronco ardiente/por besar a otra llama," the reader recognizes the figurative meaning of the communication. In other words, he can still obtain a satisfactory and reasonably discursive interpretation through the use of analytic processes. While the actual creation of the imagery may be somewhat dependent upon an altered perceptual mode, the interpretation of the imagery is still strongly bound to rational thought. This, in turn, indicates that the altered perception in question is still an adaptation of left hemisphere perceptual modes and that it does not necessarily imply a change in cerebral lateralization dominance.

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[181] Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, Obras completas, p. 84. Although the exact chronology of the Rimas is not known, the majority of these verses were composed between 1857 or 1859 and 1868.

One of the best examples of Bécquer's poetic talent is found in Rimas XIV:

> Te vi un punto, y flotando ante mis ojos
> la imagen de tus ojos se quedó,
> como la mancha oscura orlada en fuego
> que flota y ciega si se mira al sol.
>
> Adonde quiera que la vista clavo
> torno a ver sus pupilas llamear
> más no te encuentro a tí; que es tu mirada.
> unos ojos, los tuyos; nada más
>
> De mi alcoba en el ángulo los miro
> desasidos fantásticos lucir:
> cuando duermo los siento que se ciernen
> de par en par abiertos sobre mí.
>
> Yo sé hay fuegos fatuos que en la noche
> llevan al caminante a perecer:
> yo me siento arrastrado por tus ojos,
> pero adónde me arrastran no lo sé.[182]

The imagery is a combination of potentially possible and evidently impossible perceptions, the first of which are communicated figuratively and the second of which are communicated exclusively through the literal modality. As difficult as this undertaking may sound initially, the latter perceptions must, therefore, be interpreted through contextual processes. The imagenic communications which, while apparently contradictory to the laws of nature for either spatial, temporal, or physical considerations, cannot be interpreted through inferential processes and must be read contextually. When message transfers in imagery must be decoded thus, they are said to belong to the classification known as dream imagery. The spatial dislocation characteristic of dreams is found throughout the poem, but particularily in the idea of eyes in the corner of his room and soaring above him. If, as specialists have proved, dreaming is accompanied by an increase in right hemisphere activity (increase in frequency of alpha waves in left hemisphere), we may assume, with some justification, that Bécquer's right hemisphere has contributed, in no small way, to the realization of the majority of imagery found in this poem.

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[182] Bécquer, Obras, p. 87.

Interspersed among the dream images in the text, are images which present situations or comparisons which could not occur in reality, but which communicate figuratively, and which can be interpreted satisfactorily through inferential processes, as for example the lines "como la mancha oscura orlada en fuego/que flota y ciega si se mira al sol." The message in this imagery may be decoded through analytical thought patterns, and is, as a result, clearly under the guidance of the left hemisphere, both in its creation and in its reception.

We may conclude that occasionally in Bécquer's imagery participation of both cerebral hemispheres is indicated, even though the final semantic expression appears to be controlled by the verbally dominant left brain. I state that the expression of the right cerebral perceptions is controlled by the left since the actual semantics in the imagery indicate a complex logical linguistic linkage, which research has proven that the right hemisphere is incapable of achieving.

In summary, in all of the images drawn from Romanticism one fact becomes obvious; the poets are still directing the reader's attention towards demanded interpretations which can be realized through contextual and inferential readings. The images are, therefore, discursive, and their final expression is under the domination of the left cerebral hemisphere.

V. The Early Rebels: Baudelaire, Rimbaud and Mallarmé

Charles Baudelaire

The poet Charles Baudelaire is frequently credited with having "opened the door to modern literature,"[183] and in quality as well as in quantity he has few equals. His poetic innovations have led him to be called "le premier poète inquiétant dans cette longue histoire qu'est celle de notre poésie française."[184] The surrealist poet Philippe Soupault discusses Baudelaire's importance in the development of modern poetry:

> On ne peut aujourd'hui que constater son importance. Il n'est pas exagéré en effet d'ecrire que la poésie français tout entière, est . . . d'années, sous la domination plus ou moins reconnue des *Fleurs du Mal*. Que ce soit directement ou indirectement cette influence s'exerce avec une force sans cesse accrue. En vérité, depuis les *Fleurs du Mal* on a donné au mot poésie un autre sens presque totalement différent de celui adopté par les romantiques.[185]

The works of Baudelaire are generally known and detailed analysis of his poetic development is unnecessary. Instead, we will limit ourselves to an examination of Baudelaire's imagery in order to discover the macro-features which characterize his writing. With this goal in mind, a limited study consisting of pertinent critical judgements and a brief analysis of aspects of his imagery will be presented. One of Baudelaire's most important contributions was his doctrine of correspondences, our attention will be largely directed towards the way in which this concept appears in his imagery.

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[183] Angelo Bertocci, *From Symbolism to Baudelaire* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964), p. 71.

[184] Roger Bodart, "D'une certaine schizophrénie," in *Journées Baudelaire: Actes du colloque*, eds. M.M. le Comte de Launoit, Camille Engelmann, Albert Neils (Brussels: Académie royale de langue et littérature françaises, 1968), p. 62.

[185] Philippe Soupault, *Baudelaire* (Paris: Les Editions Rieder, 1931), p. 54.

Although Baudelaire did not invent the idea of correspondences, he was the first to apply it consistently and systematically in poetry, and the poetic implications of Baudelaire's implementation of the doctrine of correspondences were tremendous:

> L'application de cette découverte ouvrait à l'image un nouveau champ d'investigation poétique, elle autorise la juxtaposition des sensations, favorise la recherche des analogies lointaines et des associations rares.[186]

The doctrine of "correspondences" is best exemplified in Baudelaire's short poem entitled "Correspondances." Indeed, the impact of this text has led one critic to state that it "has had more influence than anything else he wrote: the Symbolist school of Verlaine and Mallarmé emerged from it..."[187] Another scholar has simply said that it is "the key poem of Baudelaire and represents the dominant idea of the poetic development of the nineteenth century."[188] With correspondances and universal analogy, multiple, simultaneous perceptions were to become determining characteristics of modern poetic development:

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[186] *Le Dynamisme*, p. 123.

[187] A. Carter, *Charles Baudelaire* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1977), p. 63.

> La poésie opère la synthèse des qualités de la matière, les perceptions sensibles ne se diffèrencient plus comme chez les romantiques, elles communient dans une seule et même affectivité.[189]

Despite the difficulties encountered when reading the poetry, and regardless of the apparent spontaneity of Baudelaire's images, due largely to the juxtaposition of various sensory perceptions, Eigeldinger contends that"la poésie des Fleurs du Mal ne relève pas de l'inspiration spontanée, elle est d'un effet concerté, gouvernée, façonnée au gré de la lente rumination de la pensée."[190] Indeed, he argues that Baudelaire was a cerebral poet who "recherchait par la distillation intellectuelle les vertus analogiques de la pensée."[191] and that Baudelaire's celebrated use the technique of allegorical representation consisted of an "évocation analytique d'une idée ou d'une sensation."[192] Pommier is in evident agreement with Eigeldinger's evalution noting that, despite the seeming incoherence in Baudelaire's imagery, his allegories do develop in a logical, coherent manner and "le rapport des idées commande celui des figures."[103] Clearly, these critics do not attribute his more talents to irrational moments of inspiration.

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[188] Balakian, Literary Origins p. 46.

[189] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 123.

[190] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 118.

[191] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 117.

[192] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 138.

Rather than seeking to enlarge his poetic practice through the exploitation of irrationality, Baudelaire chose to employ intellectual prowess to attain greater knowledge,[104] and, actually Baudelaire considered the imagination to be the most scientific of the faculties. For the poet "l'imagination créatrice répresente l'effort suprême de l'esprit pour dominer le désordre du monde et du rêve."[105] Charles Baudelaire's view of imagination is found in his Salon de 1859:

> Tout l'univers visible n'est qu'un magasin d'images et de signes auxquels l'imagination donnera une place et une valeur relative; c'est une espèce de pâture que l'imagination doit digérer et transformer. Toutes les facultés de l'âme doivent être subordonnées à l'imagination qui les met en réquisition toutes à la fois.[106]

This statement lends support to Eigeldinger's contention that with Baudelaire's emphasis on the analytic component of art, his "création poétique ne saurait être par consequént, que volontaire et intentionelle.[107] The rational always takes precedence over the irrational and it is the analytic (left hemisphere) component which actually determines Baudelaire's final imagenic production:

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[103] Pommier, La Mystique, p. 131.

[104] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 118.

[105] E. Fiser, Le Symbole littéraire (Paris: J. Corti, 1941), p. 116.

[106] Charles Baudelaire, "Salon de 1859," in Oeuvres complètes, ed. Claude Pichois (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), p. 1044)

[107] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 118.

> Mais l'idée est toujours première dans l'imagination du poète, elle s'incorpore une forme, une substance qui l'exprime, c'est pourquoi les images de Baudelaire sont toujours si miraculeusement transposées.[198]

George Poulet also stresses the aspect of intentionality that circumscribes and determines Baudelaire's use of and attitude towards memory:

> Le souvenir involontaire a pour lui le tort d'être fortuit. Ce que le poète veut, c'est le souvenir qui demeure perpétuellement à la disposition de l'artiste et qu'il lui plaît pour se remettre dans les humeurs qui avaient été les siennes.[199]

Later, Poulet briefly describes what happens to Baudelaire's memories when they undergo the metamorphosis which will result in his unique imagery: "Le souvenir est à la fois exalté et vaporisé par l'excitant auquel il a livré son esprit."[200]

If, as critics argue, Baudelaire's imagination is basically logical in conception and expression, the inspiration for his imagery should be found in his normative, sequential perceptions of the physical world. In essence, one could reasonably assume that many of his images are dependent upon rational memory processes:

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[198] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 141.

[199] George Poulet, La Poésie éclatée (Paris: Saint-Germain, 1980), p. 39.

[200] Poulet, La Poésie, p. 127.

> Elles sont empruntées au monde de la réminiscence. Le souvenir lui fournit des idées et des sensations purifiées de leur contenu matériel, virtuellement chargées d'une signification symbolique. Ainsi l'imagination du poète est définitivement soudée à la mémoire et c'est de leur intime collaboration que naît le flot des métaphores.[201]

Yet, despite the emphasis which Baudelaire places on analytic thought and rationality, his imagery is often difficult to interpret precisely. I believe that the reason for this lies more in Baudelaire's modes of perception than in his actual ideational or conceptual processes. It would appear that Baudelaire associated synaesthesia with moments of intense perception. Indeed, Baudelaire discusses altered states of consciousness which may influence individual perception.

> Dans certains états de l'âme presque surnaturels, la profondeur de la vie se révèle tout entière dans le spectacle, si ordinaire qu'il soit, qu'on a sous les yeux. Il en devient le symbole.[202]

Roger Bodart introduces an interesting consideration, and one which would have attracted the surrealists, when he discusses the apparent schizophrenic qualities of Baudelaire's imagery:[203]

> Le problème des épousailles insolites de la

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[201] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 127.

[202] Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, ed. Claude Pichois (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), p. 659.

[203] It is interesting to note the similarity between Bodart's interpretation of Baudelaire, and Breton's later desire to reconcile apparent contradictions, especially those of dream and reality, the pure and the impure, etc.

> poésie et de la prose ou de leur divorce, procède de l'impossibilité et du désir d'unir ce que nous appelons très vaguement le pur et l'impur, le rêve et le réel, la vie et la mort. Avec Baudelaire, arrive une poésie approchant de la démence, et cette démence est due à une impossibilité d'accepter l'univers et d'accepter soi-même; impossibilité d'autant plus tragique, que le schizophrène aimerait par-dessus tout s'accepter et accepter les autres.[204]

Bodart does not, however, limit his belief in the importance of what might be called schizophrenic perception merely to Baudelaire, but rather extends it to include virtually all artists.

> La schizophrénie, son refus de lui-même et des autres, c'est écartèlement d'un être qui expulse du centre de soi-même un être neuf que nous sommes tous plus ou moins. Tout créateur véritable est, je crois, un schizophrène qui a triomphé plus ou moins de sa schizophrènie.[205]

This would seem to be in accord not only with Breton's evaluation of the positive role of madness in the creative process, but also with current psychiatric and neurological theories which suggest that some mental illnesses are related to unacceptable perceptual modalities or deviations. Baudelaire's interest in altered perceptual modalities has led him to explore, with varying degrees of thoroughness the differences in perceptions found in hypnagogic, hypnopompic, and dream states. In an attempt to describe the experience of these perceptions more fully, Baudelaire cites a passage from Hoffmann's Kreisleriana:

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[204] Bodart, "D'une certaine schizophrénie," p. 64.

[205] Bodart, "D'une certaine schizophrénie," p. 65.

> Ce n'est pas seulement en rêve, et dans le léger délire qui précède le sommeil, c'est encore éveillé, lorsque j'entends de la musique, que je trouve une analogie et une réunion intime entre les couleurs, les sons et les parfums. Il me semble que toutes ces choses ont été engendrées par un même rayon de lumière, et qu'elles doivent se réunir dans un merveilleux concert. L'odeur des soucis bruns et rouges produit surtout un effet magique sur ma personne. Elle me fait tomber dans une profonde rêverie, et j'entends alors comme dans le lointain les sons graves et profonds du hautbois.[206]

The poet comments on the power of dreams when he writes that "la Nature (...) est réformée par le rêve, où elle est corrigée, embellie, refondue."[207] Later in the same work, Baudelaire again comments on the dream:

> Des rêves! toujours des rêves! et plus l'âme est ambitieuse et délicate, plus les rêves l'éloignent du possible. Chaque homme porte en lui sa dose d'opium naturel, incessamment sécretée et renouvelée, et, de la naissance à la mort, combien compton-nous d'heuréussie et décidé? Vivrons-nous jamais, passerons-nous jamais dans ce tableau qu'a peint mon esprit, ce tableau qui te ressemble[208]

Baudelaire, like the surrealists, believed that the young were capable of a special perceptual mode which was often extinguished as they grew older:

> C'est alors que les objets enfoncent profondément leurs empreintes dans l'esprit tendre et facile; c'est alors que les couleurs sont voyantes, et que les sons parlent une langue mystérieuse.[209]

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[206] Hoffmann, quoted by Charles Baudelaire, in "Salon de 1846," in *Oeuvres complètes*, p. 884.

[207] Baudelaire, "Le Spleen de Paris, XVIII," *Oeuvres*, p. 254.

[208] Baudelaire, "Le Spleen," p. 255.

[209] Baudelaire, "Edgar Poe, sa vie et ses ouvrages," in

In the text, "Le Peintre de la vie moderne," he further discusses this perception:

> L'enfant voit tout en nouveauté, il est toujours ivre. Rien ne ressemble plus à ce qu'on appelle l'inspiration, que la joie avec laquelle l'enfant absorbe la forme et la couleur. Aucun aspect de la vie n'est pour lui émoussé.[210]

Later in the same work, the poet mentions the relationship between memory and childhood perception:

> Tout les matériaux dont la mémoire s'est encombrée se classent, se rangent, s'harmonisent et subissent cette idéalisation forcée qui est le résultat d'une perception enfantine, c'est à dire d'une perception aiguë, magique à la force d'ingénuité.[211]

Poulet recognizes the importance of the rediscovery of childhood vision for Baudelaire's art, and, at the same time, subtly reminds the reader that these perceptions do not have to be lost to the adult: "Mais il (Baudelaire) possède un don essentiel, qu'il n'est pas impossible à l'adulte de redécouvrir et de s'approprier: c'est le don de la perception enfantine."[212]

Although Baudelaire professed an intense interest in all experiences by which altered perceptual modes could be found or induced, he is, perhaps, most famous for his ingestion of psychotropic agents. At one point, Baudelaire discusses the perceptions which result from

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[209](cont'd) Oeuvres II, p. 253.

[210] Charles Baudelaire, "Le Peintre de la vie moderne" in Oeuvres complètes, p. 1159.

[211] Baudelaire "Le Peintre de la vie moderne," Oeuvres complètes, p. 1162.

[212] Poulet, La Poésie, p. 39.

experiments with hashish:

> Les objets extérieurs prennent des apparences monstrueuses. Ils se révèlent à vous sous des formes inconnues jusque-là. Puis ils se déforment, se transforment, et enfin ils entrent dans votre être, ou bien vous entrez en eux. Les équivoques les plus singulières, les transpositions d'idées les plus inexplicables ont lieu. Les sons ont une couleur, les couleurs ont une musique. Les notes musicales sont des nombres, et vous résolvez avec une rapidité effrayante de prodigieux calculs d'arithmétique à mesure que la musique se déroule dans votre oreille. Vous êtes assis et vous fumez; vous croyez être assis dans votre pipe, et c'est vous que votre pipe fume; c'est vous qui vous exhalez sous la forme de nuages bleuâtres.[213]

He elaborates on the processes involved in this perception:

> C'est alors que commencent les hallucinations. Les objets extérieurs prennent lentement, successivement, des apparences singulières: ils se deforment et se transforment. Puis, arrivent les équivoques les méprises et les transpositions d'idées. Les sons se revêtent de couleurs et les couleurs contiennent une musique.[214]

Teruo Inoev remarks that "Après ce moment privilégié, les intoxiqués entrent dans une nouvelle étape, celle de la sensation due à la perception sous l'influence de la drogue."[215] Inoev notes certain possible parallels between Baudelaire's drug induced perceptions and those offered by poetic reverie:

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[213] Baudelaire, "Les Paradis artificiels," in Oeuvres, p. 338.

[214] Charles Baudelaire, "Les Paradis artificiels," in Oeuvres complètes, pp. 364-65.

[215] Teruo Inoev, Un Poétique de l'ivresse chez Charles Baudelaire (Tokyo: Librairie Editions France Tosho, 1977), p. 44.

> Cette opération métamorphosante sous l'influence de la drogue nous semble comparable à la rêverie poétique. Quoique Baudelaire soit toujours conscient d'une différence entre la rêverie poétique et les effets du hachisch, il n'est pas moins de l'analogie qui existe entre ce deux matières.[216]

Let us now turn our attention towards one of Baudelaire's poems in order to see how the poet's interest in and, perhaps, experience with altered perceptual modalities is reflected expressed in his imagery.

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[216] Inoev, *Une Poétique*, p. 45.

Spleen

Quand le ciel bas et lourd pèse comme un couvercle
Sur l'esprit gémissant en proie aux longs ennuis,
Et que de l'horizon embrassant tout le cercle
Il nous verse un jour noir plus triste que les nuits;

Quand la terre est changée en un cachot humide,
Où l'Espérance, comme une chauve-souris,
S'en va battant les murs de son aile timide
Et se cognant la tête à des plafonds pourris;

Quand la pluie étalant ses immenses traînées
D'une vaste prison imite les barreaux,
Et qu'un peuple muet d'infames arraignées
Vient tendre ses filets au fond de nos cerveaux,

Des cloches tout à coup sautent avec furie
Et lancent vers le ciel un affreux hurlement,
Ainsi que des esprits errants et sans patrie
Qui se mettent à geindre opiniatrement.

--Et de long corbillards, sans tambours ni musique,
Défilent lentement dans mon âme; l'Espoir
Vaincu, pleure, et l'Angoisse atroce, despotique,
Sur mon crâne incliné plante son drapeau noir.[217]

The language modality involved throughout the poem is the figurative one and the text must, therefore, be interpreted inferentially. While the initial words of the opening stanza accentuate visual imagery, with the words "ciel bas et lourd," the following combination of words "pèse comme un couvercle" informs the reader than he will have to utilize inferential reading strategies in order to decode the imagery. The analogies between the sky and a lid, and a black day sadder than the nights transfers a message of depression to the reader.

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[217] Charles Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, pp. 70-71.

The second stanza continues to use the figurative modality found in the first. However, after the inferential decoding, the abstraction of the word "espérance" assumes a concrete visual form through the analogy which the poet makes between hope and a bat. The depressing nature of the visualization is further strengthened by the reference to "plafonds pourris."

The first two lines of the third stanza communicate figuratively offering an analogy between rain and prison bars, which naturally gives an added quality of hardness to the rain, making it seem permanent rather than transient. The closing lines pose greater problems for interpretation because of the ambiguity. The reader must attempt to decide to what Baudelaire's words "un peuple muet d'infames araignées" refers. From his knowledge of semantic relations, he may decide that the image of the spiders is a concrete visualization of the feeling of hopelessness or despair.

The ambiguity is reduced in the following stanza, since inferential reading strategies clearly suggest a possible interpretation of bells suddenly peeling loudly and then, as the volume decreases, fading into a mournful continuous clang.

The beginning of the fourth stanza once again offers an example of a feeling being concretized in a form which may be perceived optically. The reference to "longs corbillards, sans tambours ni musique, Défilent lentement dans mon âme," strongly suggests negative emotions such as despair and sadness. With the image "l'Espoir/Vaincu, pleure, et l'Angoisse atroce, despotique/Sur mon crane incliné plante son drapeau noir," the reader learns that Hope is being destroyed and that Anguish is the predominant emotion which the poet is experiencing.

One of Charles Baudelaire's greatest contributions to the development of modern imagery was to recognize the value of altered perceptual modalities--in this case the ability to visually perceive something invisible--and to communicate unusual perceptions in his texts. The imagery of "Spleen," suggests that Baudelaire was attempting to create images which would grant visual forms to intangible feelings, thus making these feelings "visible" to his readers and reducing the abstraction of such words as anguish, hope, or despair.

The Imagery of Jean-Nicholas-Arthur Rimbaud

Jean-Nicholas-Arthur Rimbaud is one of the most brilliant and enigmatic poets to be found in French literature. His short literary career has had great, yet indeterminate influence on modern imagery. Countless and often contradictory books and articles have been devoted to unscrambling his cryptic writings. W. Frohock, in his study of the poet, notes the difficulty involved in interpreting him:

> No style could be more extremely elliptical, and much of the effort of interpreting such texts must go into finding plausible substitutions for the ellipses. Thus it has to be the reader who creates the coherence implied in any interpretation.[218]

Later the critic elaborates on one of the major reasons for these interpretative problems with the cranky comment:

> Obviously, Rimbaud abandons normal syntax just where the reader will miss it most, leaving him with the hope that he has understood at least in part, and with the absolute knowledge that he has not understood completely.[219]

Certain scholars have hypothesized that the poet's youth is a contributing factor to the hermetic proclivities evidenced in his communicative modes:

> Rimbaud n'est pas un poète ordinaire, parce qu'il fut à l'époque des *Illuminations* un enfant qui a su s'exprimer avec un langage d'homme, en cherchant obstinément à ne rien concéder de ses croyances enfantines et à ne rien ignorer des lois rationnelles. Cette réalisation contradictoire présentait les pires dangers et aurait dû amener une confusion.[220]

However, the issue is, I believe, far more complex than a simple contradiction between childish beliefs and supposedly adult language. Actually Rimbaud appears to have implicitly anticipated modern views on language even though he never explicated them, and possibly never fully comprehended them himself. When André Dhotel wrote that "La pensée de Rimbaud semble remonter à l'origine d'un problème qui hante la pensée moderne,"[221] the problem being referred to is that of dichotomy, particularly that which exists between the object and the *voyant*, and which is reinforced by standard language communication:

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[218] W.M. Frohock, *Rimbaud's Poetic Practice*, p. 176.

[219] Frohock, *Rimbaud*, p. 167.

[220] André Dhotel, *Rimbaud et la révolte moderne* (Paris: Gallimard, 1952), p. 212.

> Le langage même consacre une telle séparation, par la différence totale qu'il y a entre les mots et la pensée. Le langage ne sert à la connaissance, à l'entente, à l'amour qu'en déclarant d'abord la rupture entre celui qui parle et celui qui écoute.[222]

Enid Starkie, in her discussion of Rimbaud and language draws parallels between the poet's attitude towards normative communication and the views expressed by occult philosopher Vide Ballanche:

> In Ballanche's conception, language was not merely a vehicle for expressing concrete ideas or for communicating with other men. Language was, he said, gifted from its very beginning with a sort of intuition. Our modern usage of language can give us no conception of the value put on the word itself amongst primitive people, for the word originally was to give the full image of the object named. It had a kind of "illumination" of its own of which the dead signs we use today can give us no idea. The earliest hymns were composed solely of nouns and adjectives, there were no verbs for these were unnecessary.[223]

The limitations imposed by the existence of a language dichotomy--which has only recently been recognized by the scientific community--has been presented by A. Pietropinto:

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[221] Dhotel, *Rimbaud*, p. 9.

[222] Dhotel, *Rimbaud*, p. 10.

[223] Starkie, *Rimbaud*, p. 125.

> One of the prime problems that has confronted psychotherapists, regarding their therapeutic orientation, has been the limitations of verbal communication in conveying emotional feeling and unconscious material. Our ordinary spoken language is reasonably adequate for conveying factual information, asking questions, and making corrections to the listener's misperceptions of what we have already tried to convey. In such communication, we are using words as signs. A sign tends to establish a one-to-one relationship between the word and some object, action, or attribute in the real world. As Jung notes, a sign is always less than the concept it represents. Signs are used in secondary-process communication, where the highly personalized, rich associations of primary process concepts are modified to conform with the rules of adult logic to make communication as unambiguous as possible . . . language as thought is quite different from language as spoken communication.[224]

Rimbaud, like writers before him, recognizes the potential of language to offer more than just secondary-process communication and thus, for him, language "n'est plus l'expression de la pensée: il devient un réservoir d'images."[225] He broke the logical chains of language and "son esprit ne craint pas la contradiction dans les termes, il la recherche, la cultive comme un moyen d'expression spontané."[226]

The question is why he cultivated such a means. The search for an answer brings us back once again to the central problem of normative perceptions and normative or discursive communications. Clearly, while language which operates literally and figuratively is satisfactory for communicating images which are dominantly left hemisphere productions, a problem surfaces when the perceptual modalities are no longer governed by the analytic, sequential hemisphere. This, we will attempt to show, is what often occurs in Rimbaud's imagery.

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[224] Anthony Pietropinto, M.D., "The Origins of Poetry Therapy," in New Dimensions in Psychiatry Vol. 2, ed. Silvano Arieti, M.D. and Gerard Chrzanowski (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1977), p. 215.

[225] Eigeldinger, p. 212.

[226] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 229.

As Pietropinto points out, Carl Jung distinguished between two types of artistic production. With what Jung termed introverted production, the artist has a definite aim (this would correspond to imagination and fantasy imagery), while with the extroverted type, the art product arises without any analytic impetus. Jung believed that the second type (which would involve eidetic, dream, homospatial perceptions), was autonomous and free from logical ordering:

> a psychic formation that remains subliminal until its energy-charge is sufficient to carry it over the threshold into consciousness. Its association with consciousness does not mean that it is assimilated, only that it is perceived; but it is not subject to conscious control.[227]

In the scientific terms of today, Jung's "energy-charge" would correspond to an increase in alpha wave activity in the left hemisphere.

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[227] C.G. Jung, "On the Relation of Analytic Psychology to Poetry," in The Portable Jung, ed. J. Campbell (New York: Viking Press, 1971), pp. 301-322.

A large amount of the ambiguity and confusion found in Rimbaud's imagery can, I believe, be attributed to the poet's sincere attempt to realize altered perceptual modes. He held the conviction that "genius lay not in the power of invention, but in the faculty of reception."[228] He thought that one means by which he could experience altered perceptual modes was through a process of "dérèglement de tous les sens," which he describes in a letter to Georges Izambard:

> Je veux être poète, et je travaille à me rendre **voyant**: vous ne comprendrez pas du tout, et je ne saurais presque vous expliquer: Il s'agit d'arriver à l'inconnu par le dérèglement de **tous les sens**. Les souffrances sont énormes, mais il faut être fort, être né poète, et je me suis reconnu poète. C'est faux de dire: Je pense. On devrait dire: On me pense. Pardon le jeu de mots.
>
> JE est un autre. Tant pis pour le bois que se trouve violon, et nargue aux inconscients, qui ergotent sur ce qu'ils ignorent tout à fait.[229]

In a letter written to Paul Demeny only two days later, Rimbaud expands upon the idea of becoming a seer:

> Le Poète se fait **voyant** par un long, immense et raisonné **dérèglement de tous les sens**. Toutes les formes d'amour, de souffrance, de folie; il cherche lui-même, il épuise en lui tous les poisons, pour n'en garder que les quintessence. Ineffable torture où il a besoin de toute la foi, de toute la force surhumaine, où il devient entre tous le grand malade, le grand criminel, le grand maudit,--et le suprême Savant--Car il arrive à l'**inconnu**! Puisqu'il a cultivé son âme,

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[228] Starkie, *Rimbaud*, p. 112. Rimbaud's ideas on reception suggest that it is analogous to what we are terming perception.

[229] Arthur Rimbaud, Letter to Georges Izambard in *Oeuvres* (13, May 1871; rpt., Paris: Éditions Garnier Frères, 1960), pp. 343-44.

> déjà riche, plus qu'aucun! Il arrive à l'inconnu, et quand, affolé, il finirait par perdre l'intelligence de ses visions, il les a vues![230]

In his comments on these letters Thomas Williams stresses the importance of perception in the theory and points out the desire to break free from the reductive properties of rigidly confined expression and perception:

> This theory [dérèglement de tous les sens] already points up his clearly extrovertive orientation. It is not so much within himself that he hopes to discover the 'inconnu,' but in the world, provided that the world can be perceived afresh, through sense organs made utterly free from the 'reducing valve' effect of daily preoccupations with the practical and the useful, and from the compartmentalization of the habitually imposed system of concepts through which our knowledge of the world is usually strained. The truth about the world will then be not so much known as experienced in a confrontation of freshly cleansed perception."[231]

The emphasis on perception, or more precisely, different modes of perception, is clearly of paramount importance for Rimbaud, who wishes to become a voyant. However, we still do not know what perceptual modality is dominant for the seer. What precisely is this **voyance** of which Rimbaud speaks? Robert Goffin has addressed this problem, and concluded that it is not some pseudo-mystical state induced and indulged in by a petulant, disagreeable young man:

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[230] Rimbaud in a letter to Paul Demeny, 15 May 1871 in Oeuvres, p. 345.

[231] Thomas A. Williams, Mallarmé and the Language of Mysticism (Georgia: Univer. of Georgia Press, 1970), p. 12.

> La "voyance" fut pour Rimbaud ce qu'elle est exactement pour les surréalistes, un moyen d'investigation, une méthode de contrôle, un instrument de captation merveilleux.[232]

Voyance is, in essence, **perception.**

André Dhotel discusses visual perception in relation to Rimbaud:

> Mais l'exemple le plus remarquable a toujours été l'adaptation de l'oeil à la lumière, la vision. Il demeure le thème essentiel des écrits de Rimbaud, et il conduit très vite à un doute étrange . . . la connaissance ne comporte aucune garantie de la vérité.[233]

He further offers the suggestion that we find evidence of this particular type of vision in Rimbaud's imagery. He has actually perceived the images which he presents to the reader:

> Lorsque Rimbaud se présente à nous tel qu'il fut à ce moment où il ne pouvait prétendre éblouir personne par ses écrits bizarres, nous nous demandons s'il n'était pas à la recherche d'une vérité curieuse, étrangère à notre esprit. A mesure que nous lisons ce qu'il nous a laissé, la conviction se fait. Certaines phrases ressemblent à des fragments d'une correspondance hâtive, ou même à des aperçus d'expériences qu'il aurait simplement notés.[234]

Interestingly, particularly in light of the brilliant image strings which characterize Rimbaud's poems, is Frohock's comparison of the poet's "Unknown" with eidetic imagery, for the appearance of

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[232] Robert Goffin, Rimbaud vivant (Belgium: Éditions Corrêa, 1937), p. 79.

[233] André Dhotel, Rimbaud et la révolte moderne (Paris: Gallimard, 1952), pp. 9-10.

[234] Dhotel, Rimbaud, p. 19.

"hallucinatory" images in his texts, could be explained by this special type of imagenic perception.

The eidetic image is a little understood and highly controversial phenomenon. However, all researchers do agree that it is an extremely intense visual experience. The eidetic image is considered to be very close to perception itself.[235] In the case of this imagery the relationship between image and perception appears to be even stronger than in other imagenic forms so far discussed in our survey:

> There is now a large data-base indicating that imagery is functionally equivalent and complementary to perception (Marks, 1982a; Shepard & Podgorny, 1978). Hebb (1968) suggested that imagery is a reinstatement of perception in which cortical cell assemblies are activated in the absence of a stimulous pattern upon which they were originally based: the eidetic image includes the activity of first order cell assemblies that are characteristic of perception but absent from the memory image.[236]

In his discussion of eidetic imagery psychiatrist Harry Slochower introduces the vitally important consideration of parallels between the right hemisphere and eidetic imagery when he states that the "the Unconscious was emergent from the visible perceptual process itself,"[237] and that "the nature and function of the Unconscious (right hemisphere) is congruent with the nature and function of Eidetic Perception."[238] In his article he draws attention to the tendency of modern art towards abstraction, a problem which literary criticism itself has compounded through a critical compendium of abstract terminology. He argues that such critical approaches are inappropriate for examinations of art works where the right hemisphere plays an important role in the creative process. He contends that because of different perceptual modes the unconscious (right hemisphere) communicates differently than does the conscious:

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[235] David Marks and Peter McKeller, "The Nature and Function of Eidetic Imagery," in Journal of Mental Imagery, 6 (1982), 5.

[236] David Marks and Peter McKeller, "The Nature and Function of Eidetic Imagery," 7; and D.O. Hebb, "Concerning Imagery," in Psychological Review, 75 (1968), 473.

[237] Harry Slowchower, "Eidetics and Psychoanalysis," in Journal of Mental Imagery, 6 (Spring 1982), p. 89.

> This insight applies to the Unconscious which "communicates" not by abstractions, not by grammatical structure, that is, not by scientific categories. Its native manner of "speaking" is by way of analogy, symbol, metaphor and imagery through the gesture, hint and suggestion. Now, it is through such vehicles that it evinces the power to awaken and to quicken our feelings, emotions, and desires, spur our actions and our passions. At the same time--and here lies one miraculous phenomenon of this language--it arouses both emotional response and provides intellectual understanding.
>
> The emphasis on eidetics of **Perception** (vision, sound, touch, etc.) can serve as a much needed corrective to the abstractionist criticism of art and literature in our time. Here, high-sounding terminology, such as "Density," "Grammar," "Ontology," "Rebirth," "Archetype," bypasses the language of art by a kind of "Upward Reductionism" in which the sensuous Body Language of art is ignored in favour of a terminology of Universals. However, art is defined by presenting them in their individuality, their material immanence and shown through the sensuous language of metaphor, imagery, through color, sound, rhythm, style,

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[238] Slochower, "Eidetics," p. 89.

and form.[239]

The possibility of Rimbaud having experienced and experimented with this imagenic mode is supported by the current hypothesis that "people with a high degree of eidetic imagery have had more social deprivation in childhood than others."[240] Although until recently, many scholars assumed that eidetic perception was "virtually non-existent in adults," we now know that it may exist at any stage of development. Therefore, we can legitimately assume that Rimbaud may have retained or recovered some eidetic ability.

Some of the best examples of these "eidetic" images may be found in the poem "Le Bateau Ivre," and an an examination of images in this work, should facilitate a more thorough understanding of Rimbaud's poetics.[241]

Le Bateau ivre

Stanza I

Comme je descendais des Fleuves impassibles,
Je ne me sentis plus guidé par les haleurs:
Des Peaux-Rouges criards les avaient pris pour cibles,
Les ayant cloués nus aux poteaux de couleurs.

Stanza II

J'étais insoucieux de tous les équipages,
Porteur de blés flamands ou de cotons anglais.
Quand avec mes haleurs ont fini ces tapages,

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[239] Slochower, "Eidetics," p. 89.

[240] Marks and McKellar, "The Nature and Function of Eidetic Imagery," p. 59. In this instance, the term social deprivation is understood to include unsatisfactory emotional fulfillment.

[241] As the poem is too long to be reproduced in its entirety, typical stanzas have been selected for discussion.

Les Fleuves m'ont laissé descendre où je voulais.

Stanza III

Dans les clapotements furieux des marées,
Moi, l'autre hiver, plus sourd que les cerveaux d'enfants,
Je courus! Et les Péninsules démarées
N'ont pas subi tohu-bohus plus triomphants.

Stanza IV

La tempête a béni mes éveils maritimes.
Plus léger qu'un bouchon j'ai dansé sur les flots
Qu'on appelle rouleurs éternels de victimes,
Dix nuits, sans regretter l'oeil niais des falots!

Stanza V

Plus douce qu'aux enfants la chair des pommes sures,
L'eau verte pénétra ma coque de sapin
Et des taches de vins bleus et des vomissures
Me lava, dispersant gouvernail et grappin.

Stanza IX

J'ai vu le soleil bas, taché d'horreurs mystiques,
Illuminant de longs figements violets,
Pareils à des acteurs de drames très-antiques
Les flots roulant au loin leurs frissons de volets.

Stanza X

J'ai rêvé la nuit verte aux neiges éblouies,
Baiser montant aux yeux des mers avec lenteurs,
La circulation des sèves inouïes,
Et l'éveil jaune et bleu des phosphores chanteurs!

Stanza XIII

J'ai vu fermenter les marais énormes, nasses
Où pourrit dans les joncs tout un Léviathan!
Des écroulements d'eaux au milieu des bonaces,
Et les lointains vers les gouffres cataractant!

Stanza XIV

Glaciers, soleils d'argent, flots nacreux, cieux de braises!
Echouages hideux au fond des golfes bruns
Où les serpents géants dévorés des punaises
Choient, des arbres tordus, avec de noirs parfums![242]

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[242] Arthur Rimbaud: Oeuvres (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1960), pp.

The first two stanzas communicate in the figurative modality, and can be understood inferentially. The language transfers a message describing of a scene which could feasibly occur in the world as perceived normatively through cerebral dominance of the left hemisphere. The language modality changes, however, in the third stanza with the communication "Moi, l'autre hiver, plus sourd que les cerveaux d'enfants,/ Je courus! Et les Péninsules démarées/N'ont pas subi tohu-bohus plus triomphants." We can logically infer the analogies and relationships found in the figurative communication. While the image type is now primarily that of fantasy, the perceptions which are being expressed in the image, although physically impossible, are amenable to logical decoding processes and this indicates continued left brain dominance. With the fourth stanza the analogy between the poet and the boat becomes explicit. Interestingly, because of the now overt analogy, the reader is signalled to re-evaluate his initial figurative reading of the first two stanzas, this time recognizing other possible interpretations. The language modality is figurative, the imagery is fantasy, and, once again, the reader finds that he may interpret the communication through normative logical processes. The message transfer is effectively maintained with significant discursiveness.

The following stanza is of particular importance, not only because it officially announces the release of the poet from the restraint offered by his previous life and perceptions, but more importantly because it raises an important question, for which I can only propose a possible answer. I refer to the images which read "L'eau verte pénétra ma coque de sapin/Et des taches de vins bleus et des vomissures/Me lava." We can decode the image in the traditional fashion--specifically we can arrive at a reading where the poet is saying that the water is as sweet to him as the taste of an apple is to a child, that it is ridding him of the cheap (vins bleus) and dirty or distasteful (vomissures) of the past, leaving him free. We could also accept the hypothesis that the poet is actually describing a mode of perception.[243] In this case, in addition to analytically and sequentially decoding the signs, the reader would form a vivid and colorful mental image, paralleling that of the poet. We would reproduce the visualization of a scene where a boat is literally being penetrated and washed by green water and where this water is washing away stains left by blue wine and vomit, carrying with it rudder and grappling hook. We would, in other words, read the imagery literally rather than figuratively, accepting the perceptions which Rimbaud offers. While I certainly do not wish to suggest that visualization offers a complete reading, it does provide the reader with an alternative approach to the images. By reading visually, we relate the images to the concrete rather than to the abstract.

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[243] This approach finds substantiation later in the text where the poet emphasizes dreaming and seeing.

This stanza gives us the opportunity to explore the differences between imagination and fantasy imagery, and the reader's reaction to these differences, in greater depth. This is a important issue in modern poetry, since often textual intepretation relies more upon the reader's reaction than upon the poet's intent.

In the first stanza, the scene presented is, as we have stated, one which could exist in the world, and which would be in accord with left hemisphere perceptions and expectations. Therefore, as we read it we can simultaneously develop a visualization of the scene without encountering any serious difficulties. We do not find the language to be particularily tortuous or hermetic, largely, I contend because we do not expect it to be. However, when we are later confronted with fantasy imagery in combination with imagination imagery, and with simple comparisons, we immediately respond by attempting to reconcile our analytic semantic expectations with the imagery in the text. We attempt this reconcilation through analytic processes which are based on normative perceptions. In essence, we may continue reading as if the poet were presenting images which reflect normative perceptions, even after he introduces altered perceptual modalities. For example, we know that he could not have perceived this image in the real world; we know that the boat is a symbol for the poet. Therefore, we assume that virtually everything can be a symbol for something else, particularly if we cannot understand the message as the poet presents it. This, I believe, is what Slochower meant when he suggested that sometimes critical approaches have been inappropriately applied, because critics did not want to accept the validity of altered or alternate perceptual modalities. Entirely too frequently, an increase in alpha wave activity accompanied by greater right hemisphere perceptual activity has led people to mistake a poetic image for evidence of a writer's propensity towards hallucination--a word which suffers from over-application in much literary criticism.

In the ninth stanza, the emphasis and importance of perception becomes explicit. The first two lines which read "J'ai vu le solleil bas, taché d'horreurs mystiques/Illuminant de longs figements violets," communicate literally. The poet is recording or recreating a perceptual experience. The words "taché d'horreurs mystiques," introduce a strong element of ambiguity into the message transfer, and, at the same time, have the potential to produce an emotional response in the reader who may see the sun stained with his own interpretation of mystic horrors. The sun's illumination of long violet clots is again ambiguous, for the reader cannot logically and definitively decode the meaning of the word "clots," nor can he know why Rimbaud chose this particular word, although he may infer a relationship between stains, clots and blood. However, visually the reader can recreate the picture of a sun with violet coloration. In the subsequent lines Rimbaud presents a visual picture of waves in the distance and explains that, to him, they have a resemblance to actors in ancient dramas. He is, at this time, explaining a perception which may enable the reader to form a more percise mental picture of the scene. The only instances when the figurative communication is employed occur when he refers to "horreurs mystiques," and when he draws the analogy between waves and actors. The other images are communicated through the literal mode and could be read as presentations of certain perceptual experiences. The visualizations are, in essence, personal adaptations of normative perceptions of a sunset or a sunrise and the reader has little difficulty in understanding and recreating the picture.

In the next stanza, Rimbaud formally introduces dream perception. Because the reader is informed of this change in perceptual modalities, he is warned that the message transfer may not conform to our analytic semantic expectations. The communication may appear to be totally irrational since it reflects right hemispheric dominance, rather than left. As opposed to the imagery in the previous stanza, the imagery cannot now be visualized through reconstrrucing previous perceptual experiences, nor can it be interpreted as reflecting slight variations of normative perceptions. Perhaps the most striking feature of the imagery in this stanza is the stress on colour which promotes the formulation of an extremely forceful visual picture, or more precisely a flowing series of perceptions, none of which could be perceived thus when the left hemisphere is dominant. The force and brilliance of the imagery combined with its verbal non-discursiveness suggest that one way--perhaps the most efficacious way--of understanding the imagery is simply to visualize it, to try to see what the poet saw, even if we know that the communication has no pragmatic or utilitarian value, other than to share a passing perceptual experience.

In stanzas XIII and XIV, Rimbaud once again offers the reader images which, although they do not conform strictly to relational expectations, evidence sufficient similarity to normative perceptions to be comprehended as reflecting a list of perceptual experiences. For example, the image "Des écroulements d'eaux au milieu des bonaces," could suggest to a reader a picture of a waterfall pouring into a still lake, while the images "Glaciers, soleils d'argent, flots nacreux, cieux de braises!" prompt the reader to visualize glaciers, a sun as it could be perceived under certain atmospheric conditions, waves and skies as they could appear at sunset, sunrise, etc. The force and brilliance of these image projections, in addition to the rapidity of their appearance suggests that they are actually eidetic in nature, for they certainly give the impression that they are occuring at the interface of perception and thought which is where the processes that give rise to eidetic imagery are thought to occur.

"Le Bateau ivre" is a fascinating poem in that it combines normative or left dominant perception--yielding imagination and fantasy imagery--with non-normative or right dominant perceptions--yielding dream and eidetic imagery--to offer the reader a unique opportunity to observe how the differences in these perceptual modalities affect the creation and expression of imagery. The poem allows us, indeed forces us, to recognize the features of imagery types which necessitate the employment of decoding procedures which involve the analytic, sequential processes controlled by the left cerebral hemisphere, and those which require the activation of holistic, simultaneous processes.

Mallarmé: Normative Perception--Altered Communication

One of the driving forces in modern literature has been the attempt to discover and express previously undisclosed aspects of reality and to communicate these discoveries through language. The potential of language manipulation and experimentation itself as a means through which knowledge could be increased became of great interest to many poets, but most particularly to the Symbolists. Their cryptic, hermetic, and complex images have left us texts which, more frequently than not, pose problems of interpretation. Malcolm Bowie's comment that in modern poetry "certainty is the remotest and least practical of goals,"[244] seems especially appropriate to the Symbolist movement. This judgement certainly applies in the case of the poet Stéphane Mallarmé, whose imagery is so difficult to understand that Larousse's six volume Dictionnaire du vingtième siecle asserts that with the exception of a few lines, the poems of Mallarmé are unintelligible.[245] Bowie obviously agrees with this evaluation stating, in his turn, that "the surface of the poems is so aggressively fragmented that even the most accomplished reader runs the risk of finding no more than superior nonsense as the reward for his endeavours.[246] In his turn, Peter Broome complains of the difficulties involved when reading Mallarme:

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[244] Malcolm Bowie, Mallarmé and the Art of Being Difficult (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1978), p. 4.

> "One is left uncertain of the grammatical relationship between the words. One's final impression in a poem of this kind is that of moving in a universe of private signs where language points in many directions but does not lead anywhere conclusive."[247]

These few comments clearly illustrate the confusion many critics encounter, and the frustration some feel when confronted with Mallarmé's imagery. The question which arises is what is the source of this confusion? Is it a result of alterations in perceptual modalities which give rise to perceptions that the poet cannot adequately express in normative language (e.g. multiple simultaneous images), or rather is it related to communicative modalities which Mallarmé intentionally renders increasingly abstract? Attempts to penetrate his obscure imagery have led to the development of two major streams of criticism. The first focuses on his life, often with emphasis on his mental health, while the second concentrates on the manifest importance of language manipulation in his poetry. We shall examine both of them briefly in order to ascertain if his communicative modalities can, to some extent, be explained by altered perceptual ones, or if they are rather evidence of abstract cognitive formulations.

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[245] Charles Mauron, "Introduction," Stéphane Mallarmé: Poems, trans. Charles Mauron and Roger Fry (London: Chatto & Windus of London, 1951), p. 6.

[246] Bowie, Mallarmé, p. 16.

[247] Peter Broome and Graham Chesters, The Appreciation of Modern French Poetry (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1976), p. 34.

Let us begin with some major views concerning Mallarmé's communicative modalities, since an understanding of the poet's attitude towards language and his use of it will help us to determine whether his imagery reflects an increase in right hemisphere activity or whether it is left hemisphere dominant.

Mallarmé, like many other poets, found language to be insufficient to the demands made on it. However, he was more systematic and more consistent than most in his attempts to expand its boundaries:

> Mallarmé n'est sans doute pas le seul écrivain qui ait considéré comme insuffisants les moyens d'expression que lui offrait la langue de son époque et qui ait cherché à en créer d'autres, mais il est probablement, de tous les écrivains français, celui qui a poursuivi cette recherche avec le plus de persévérance, d'ingéniosité et de passion du système, parce qu'il y voyait la

> tâche essentielle du poète.[248]

Mallarmé himself explains where he believes poetry lies. He also notes the allusive component of language which is so important in his imagery, and which perplexes such a vast number of literary scholars:

> Je dis qu'existe entre les vieux procédés et le sortilège, que restera la poésie, une parité secrète je l'énonce ici et peut-être personnellement me suis-je complu à le marquer, par des essais, dans une mésure qui a outrepassé l'aptitude à jouir consentie par mes contemporains. Evoquer, dans une ombre exprès, l'objet tu, par des mots allusifs, jamais directs, se réduisant à du silence égal, comporte tentative proche de créer: vraisemblablement dans la limite de l'idée mis en jeu par l'enchanteur de lettres jusqu'à que, certes, scintille, quelque illusion égale au regard. Le vers, trait incantatoire.[249]

Mallarmé concentrated on the suggestive power of words to such an extent that he became almost mystical in his approach to language:

> (Il) a longuement médité sur le pouvoir du mot, sur ses possibilités métaphoriques et sur le rôle qu'il était appelé à jouer dans une poésie reposant sur l'esthétique de la suggestion. Les mots sont l'instrument de la pensée, de là chez Mallarmé cette divine possession du langage, cette souveraine domination du monde des images. Il considère la valeur de chaque terme en lui-même, sa sonorité autant que la signification et sa force allusive.[250]

The emphasis which Mallarmé put on words as individual units is seen in an anecdote recounted by Degas who had complained to him about the difficulties involved in writing poetry:

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[248] Jacques Scherer, Grammaire de Mallarmé (Paris: Editions A.-G. Nizet, 1977), p. 7.

[249] Stéphan Mallarmé Oeuvres complètes, ed. Henri Mondor and Jean Aubry (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), p. 400.

[250] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 190.

> J'ai perdu toute ma journée sur un sacré sonnet, sans avancer d'un pas...Et cependant les idées ne me manquent pas...J'en suis plein...J'en ai trop...Et Mallarmé avec sa douce profondeur: Mais Degas, ce n'est pas avec des idées que l'on fait des vers...C'est avec des mots.[251]

Mallarmé studied each word so carefully that he actually developed a scientific study:

> Le développement de sa science des mots, des figures, et des formes soutient et nourrit l'approfondissement de sa conscience des choses, et même transforme son jugement sur elles au point qu'il ne voit plus en celles-ci que les éléments d'un poème possible--que les symboles de son état intérieur.[252]

The development of this word science permitted him to create remarkable imagenic communications from words which were apparently chosen at random. For example, despite Mallarmé's systematic approaches, he did, from time to time, utilize unorthodox measures to stimulate the creative processes. Occasionally the word actually preceeded both the perceptual and the cognitive activity involved in imagery creation:

> Mallarmé commençait certains de ses poèmes . . . en jetant des mots sur le papier, deçà, delà, comme le peintre jette des touches sur la toile, et s'occupait seulement ensuite de les relier pour en faire des phrases et des poèmes, suivant les règles de la composition la plus rigoureuse.[253]

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[251] Degas, quoted by Eigeldinger in Le Dynamisme, p. 191.

[252] Pierre Beausire, Mallarmé: Poésie et poétique (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1974), p. 34.

[253] Schérer, La Grammaire, p. 164.

In these instances where the word preceeds the image, Schérer believes that creative development is possible only because Mallarmé already had a general idea of the image in his mind, or of the emotional state which he wished to express:

> Si . . . Mallarmé avait l'habitude d'en user ainsi, c'est qu'il avait dans l'esprit, préexistante, l'allure générale de sa phrase ou de son vers, et qu'il s'efforçait de la fixer, de la matérialiser et de la préciser par ces mots-repères. Il construisait ainsi, par approximations de plus en plus exigeantes, un ensemble véritablement syntaxique.[254]

The actual difficulty _vis à vis_ the interpretation of Mallarmé's imagery lies not in semantic innovations, but rather, as Scherer points out, in precisely this syntactic ensemble which requires the reader to perform mental acrobatics:

> La difficulté de la syntaxe de Mallarmé contraste avec le caractère au total très conservateur du vocabulaire. Ses innovations dans ce dernier domain sont minimes et constituent des exceptions.[255]

The substantive, which is considered to be the most concrete language component, predominates in Mallarmé's imagery.[256] Paradoxically the frequency of its appearance does not reduce abstraction in the imagenic communications. Indeed, in spite of the preponderance of the substantive, critical comments like the following are not uncommon: "Mallarmé manifeste une distinctive prédilection pour les termes abstraits, pour les mots qui s'incarnent le moins possible, qui par leur vague et leur fluidité généralisent la pensée."[257]

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[254] Schérer, _La Grammaire_, p. 164.

[255] Schérer, _La Grammaire_, p. 157.

[256] See Camille Soula, "Definitions," in _Le Point_ février-avril 1944, p. 83; Charles Milner, "Gongora et Mallarmé" in _Esprit nouveau_, december, 1920, p. 290; Scherer, _Grammaire_, p. 139; Albert Thibaudet, _La Poésie de Stéphane Mallarmé_ (Paris: Gallimard, 1926), p. 316; Pierre Beausire, _Mallarmé: Poésie et poétique_ (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1974), p. 171.

These two observations appear to be contradictory, yet both are true. There are nouns drawn from perceptual experiences (visual communication) as opposed to nouns which evolve from cognitive processes, and which are often employed to express abstract concepts (verbal communication).[258] The nouns which we find in Mallarmé's imagery belong primarily to the second category. For example, in the first stanza of the poem "L'Azur" we find the substantives "éternel," "ironie," "génie," and "Douleurs," all of which refer, in essence, to something which cannot be visually reproduced. The abstraction of these words is reinforced by the use of such adjectives as "sereine," and "stérile," which are associated more with concepts than with visual experiences.

Pierre Beausire comments on the effect which this abstraction has on the reader--specifically on the activation of analytic thought processes:

> Ce puissant travail d'abstraction et de définition qu'implique l'usage ou prescrit l'ambition d'une langue propre et éprouvée,

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[257] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 191.

[258] In other words, there are, as stated at the outset two types of thought: visual thought and verbal thought.

> cette recherche constante des équivalences, cette permanente appréciation de nos données, cette intelligence active des formes, des rapports et des propriétés que postule le travail poétique lui-même, ont pour éffet d'exercer notre volonté, de développer nos sens et notre mémoire, d'aiguiser notre faculté analytique et de porter enfin notre sentiment général de la vie à la limite de sa capacité même.[259]

The decoding of abstraction necessitates activation of the reader's analytic faculties, not of his holistic ones. Scherer believes that when sufficient effort is made, when our analytic faculties are sufficiently sharp, Mallarmé's imagery can be understood and rendered more discursive:

> Dans la mesure où son emploi de la langue, d'une part n'est pas conforme à l'usage commun, d'autre part est caractérisé par une constance et une cohérence (relatives) semblables à celles qu'on trouve dans les langues, sa parole n'est pas purement individuelle; elle est structurée, et il est possible d'en établir la grammaire. J'utilise ce terme, vaste et vague malgré son emploi traditionnel, de grammaire, parce qu'il établit, lui aussi, une relation dialectique entre une langue et une parole toutes deux indispensables: cette quasi-langue, créée par Mallarmé et qu'on appellera, si l'on veut, le mallarméen, peut être objectivement décrite par une grammaire, qui toutefois n'aura de réalité que par référence à la parole du poète en ce qu'elle a d'unique.[260]

The critical data assayed so far--the complex linking structure of the semantic units and the frequency of abstraction--indicate that Mallarmé's imagery is under the dominance of left hemisphere processes. However, let us now turn our attention towards the more psychological approaches to Mallarmé in order to see the ramifications of psychological treatment of the poet's imagery.

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[259] Beausire, Mallarmé, pp. 38-39.

[260] Scherer, La Grammaire, p. 8.

I am far from being an advocate of the branch of literary analysis which employs Freudian psychology, and such studies are not useful, in themselves, for more neurologically oriented imagery examinations based on differential hemispheric perceptions, but they do provide extensive biographical background which can be employed to facilitate such examinations. In fact, in the case of Stéphane Mallarmé, psychological approaches have not only brought to light pertinent information regarding the poet's mental state, they have also offered a plausible, well-substantiated explication of the poet's images.

Through reliance on a combination of the biographical and psychological data available, scholars have decoded most of Mallarmé's writings. Studies utilizing the psychological approach have revealed discernable patterns in Mallarmé's imagery. These interpretative examinations indicate that many of the symbols in the imagery refer firstly to his sister who died when the poet was fifteen, and secondly to his mother who died when he was six. That Mallarmé suffered three attacks of true depression in the medical, not the metaphysical sense, is a well documented fact.[261] It is also an established fact that Mallarmé had a schizoid temperament. Indeed, when the poet was at Besançon, Avignon he almost went insane.[262]

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[261] Charles Mauron, *Introduction to the Psychoanalysis of Mallarmé* (Berkeley: University of California Press,

Although I do support the critical contention that the death of his mother and his sister exercised a tremendous influence on Mallarmé's imagery, I do not subscribe to the theory that his images only reveal preoccupations hidden in a latent form somewhere in the Freudian unconscious. Studies which, after establishing the fact that Mallarmé had schizoid patterns evident in his personality, attempt to equate his unique creative processes with a rather simplistic version of sublimation and argue that "la double blessure oedipienne fournissent . . . une explication simple pour les réseaux de symboles"[263] in his work are guilty of textual oversimplification, if not textual manipulation.

Knowledge of Mallarmé's background encourages critics to draw parallels not only between his unique linguistic expression and his "schizoid personality" but also between his imagery and altered perceptual modalities. Unfortunately, these parallels often do more to obfuscate the imagery issue than to clarify it. For example, Eigeldinger posits a relationship between Mallarme's perception and that offered by the dream

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[261] (cont'd) 1963), pp. 59-60.

[262] Ibid., p. 61.

[263] Mauron, Introduction, p. 77.

experience when he states that the poet "évapore la réalité de la perception dans une sorte de rêve artificiellement conçu."[264] He later suggests a similarity between Mallarmé's perceptual modality and a hallucinatory one when he writes that "il semble qu'il n'écrivait qu'en proie à une sorte d'hallucination verbale, caractérisée par une extrême lucidité et par une intelligence profonde des correspondances les plus lointaines et les plus inattendues."[265] It is almost as difficult to understand what is meant by the descriptions "artificially conceived dream," and "extremely lucid verbal hallucination" as it is to explicate Mallarmé's poetry.

In discussions of poetic imagery, and of altered perceptual modalities, it is of paramount importance to differentiate between cognitive and perceptual affective experiences. I should like to propose that Mallarmé's very conscious, left hemisphere dominant knowledge of such monumentous issues as the dichotomies between life/death, presence/absence, meaning/non-meaning, etc., combined with a desire to explore the essence of these abstractions, led him to develop a special language which could be used to express, and perhaps even engender a mystical, abstract state roughly corresponding to metaphysical concerns. Indeed, Mauron notes that "If he [Mallarmé] seems to be writing in a foreign tongue, it is because he was really and truly a foreigner. He lived and above all else thought in a foreign mode."[266] Mauron also argues--and I support this contention--that the poet's obscurity "derives from the strangeness of a mode of thought turned back upon itself."[267] Thus, in order to appreciate Mallarmé, the reader must "get used to a way of thinking which is very unlikely to be his own."[268]

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[264] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 178.

[265] Eigeldinger, Le Dynamisme, p. 188.

The most logical way of attempting to gain access to this other way of thinking is, of course, to examine a sample of Mallarmé's poetry. I have selected for this examination one of Mallarmé's best known and most popular works, the sonnet entitled "Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui." Part of the reason for this text's favourable reception is, as Mauron points out, that "it is evidently symbolical in general intention, and any cultivated person can, at any rate, see the general drift of it,"[269] which is more than one can say about many other of Mallarmé's later poems. "Le vierge, le vivace, et le bel aujourd'hui" is an interesting text to study for another reason. It is not readily tractable to Freudian examinations. Consequently, critics are forced to search beyond the convenient explications offered by theories on repressed Oedipal complexes, and sister or mother obsessions. This poem requires that the reader address the deeper and more complex issues which concerned the poet, issues which may have had their inception in the death of family members, but which led him to far vaster considerations.

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[266] Mauron, Poèmes, p. 9.

[267] Mauron, Poèmes, pp. 13-14.

[268] Mauron, Poèmes, p. 14.

[269] Mauron, Poèmes, p. 230.

> Le vierge, le vivace et le bel aujourd'hui
> Va-t-il nous déchirer avec un coup d'aile ivre
> Ce lac dur oublié que hante sous le givre
> Le transparent glacier des vols qui n'ont pas fui!
>
> Un cygne d'autrefois souvient que c'est lui
> Magnifique mais qui sans espoir se délivre
> Pour n'avoir pas chanté la région où vivre
> Quand du stérile hiver a resplendi l'ennui.
>
> Tout son col secouera cette blanche agonie
> Par l'espace infligée à l'oiseau qui le nie,
> Mais non l'horreur du sol où le plumage est pris.
>
> Fantôme qu'à ce lieu son pur éclat assigne,
> Il s'immobilise au songe froid de mépris
> Que vêt parmi l'exil inutile le Cygne.[270]

The first problem which rises ominously to greet the reader is the difficulty imposed by the complex and concentrated syntactical structures with which Mallarmé intentionally or unintentionally obfuscates the message, and which themselves upset the reader's linguistic frameworks.[271]

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[270] Stéphane Mallarmé, Oeuvres complètes (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1945), pp. 67-8.

[271] The The best example of syntactic compression is found in Stanza II where it is carried to such an extent

However, quite aside from syntactic difficulties which undoubtably contribute to the ambiguity in the communication, the reader faces an even more severe problem. Upon his initial encounter with the sonnet, the reader immediately recognizes the presence of the figurative language modality which signals the activation of inferential reading processes. Unfortunately, the words are no longer related to one another in accordance with either our verbal or visual relational expectations. Consequently traditional utilization of inferential processes no longer enables the reader to decode satisfactorily and thus to understand the message. Our task is to try to comprehend why this breakdown in interpretive metholodogy occurs.

When first approaching the sonnet, the perplexed reader[272] will notice the more salient technical features of composition as, for example, the preponderance of "i" sounds, particularily at the end of lines, and the emphasis on the colour white with the words "vierge," "givre," "glacier," "stérile," "hiver," and "froid." Next, he may observe the frequent appearance of abstract, non-visual words which refer to concepts rather than perceptions, as for example, "oublié," "autrefois," "sans espoir," "espace," and

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[271](cont'd) that the grammar is actually incorrect. Mauron point this out in Poèmes, p. 233.

[272] When I refer to reader in this discussion, I exclude Mallarmé scholars who are already familiar with the intricacies of his poetic practice.

"ennui."

After having proceeded this far, he may return once again to the text with a general, unverbalized, and intuitive grasp of the over-all tone of the imagery, but it is unlikely he will be much closer to decoding the imagery either verbally or visually. Although the sonnet may engender an emotional response--depending, of course, on the reader's sensibilities--the primary reaction to the text is an intellectual one as the reader tries to redefine and then to forge links between words which have been made to assume a symbolic communicative function while still operating in the figurative mode.

The imagery in the opening line offers the reader three concepts--those of virgin(ity), vivaciousness, and beauty which indicate an aura of optimism. At the same time, the cognitive idea of purity and the visual perception of whiteness are implied, elements which echo constantly throughout the poem. With the second line a suggestion of a bird image is found in the words "aile ivre." There is a double implication in the line. "Coup" implies movement, and movement is generally considered to have a positive value, but at the same time the adjective "ivre" suggests that the movement is not necessarily purposeful or under control. In the third line whiteness and a type of transparency is suggested by "givre," and there is an intimation of distancing with the concepts of hardness, of being forgotten, and of the invisibility of haunting. Also with haunting comes the idea of being untouchable, of being in isolation, an idea which finds echoes later in the poem. In the last line of the first stanza untouchability and incorporality are suggested by the reference to transparency. The syntactic link of "glacier" with "transparent" also implies an unspecified relationship between transparency and the frost mentioned in the previous line via the semantic bonds between "glacier" and "givre." The mention of "vols qui n'ont pas fui" contrasts with the earlier "déchirer" as strong movement becomes non-movement. At the same time, the possible connotation of emptiness in the unflown flights echoes the idea of "absence" inherent in "oublié."

The bird image hinted at ealier is picked up and expanded in the reference to "un cygne." The swan is the central symbol in the sonnet, and has variously been identified as Life, Death, Youth, Movement, Thought, and the Poet. Although because of the very abstract language employed, it is impossible to determine precisely the "correct" interpretation, if one can indeed be said to exist, I should like to offer the suggestion that the swan as poet may be the most convincing. Considering Mallarmé's abiding interest in language and his belief in the necessary isolation of the artist in order to preserve the purity of his poetic expression, this interpretation would offer one of the more consistent and therefore more viable explications. The allusion to remembering "se souvient" contrasts with the "oublié" encountered earlier. The word "autrefois" adds yet another element of indeterminacy, offering a hazy idea of a time past. The swan is magnificent, but without hope, an apparent contradiction, yet, if understood in terms of the position of the poet and his poetry in the world, could be interpreted as Mallarmé's feelings towards his art.

The swan (poet) frees himself "pour n'avoir pas chanté où vivre/Quand du stérile hiver a resplendi l'ennui." Perhaps, he is implying that he is liberating himself because his "song" is not programmatic or didactic. It is, rather, l'art pour l'art. The sterile winter, while picking up the ever-present references to white, could also be interpreted as a symbol for "writer's block." Even when only boredom shone from the poet's mind, he refused to proffer platitudes or to reduce his art. He did not sing "la région où vivre."

The next stanza opens with the promise of movement as "Tout son col secouera cette blanche agonie." Etymologically "agonie" implies not only agony, but also death from which the reader may infer that the poet is confronting artistic extinction. Interesting also is the modification of "agonie" by "blanche" which, while continuing the emphasis on whiteness, implies a purity in this death. The reference to "blanche" suggests, in addition, a bond between the white agony and the sterile winter as if the agony was, in some way, a result of the sterility, or his inability to couple fruitfully with his readers. In the second line, the reader learns that the "blanche agonie" has been inflicted on the bird by the space which he denies. On one hand, the space appears to be tied to the sterile winter, while on the other it could refer to the non-poetic world in which Mallarmé actually lives and which he is attempting to deny through the act of poetic creation. Although he may try to "[secouer] cette blanche agonie," he cannot shake the horror "du sol où le plumage est pris." In essence, he cannot escape from the world.

The first line of the last stanza again offers echoes of past images with "Fantôme" which suggests both haunting and death. Indeed, the reference to the phantom appears to be foreshadowing the swan's approaching death. The phantom has been assigned to this place because of his "pur éclat." Although the reader does not know exactly where or what this place is, he could infer that the place is isolated, perhaps worthy of the poet's purity. Movement ceases in the next line with the words "Il s'immobilise au songe froid de mépris," and with this cessation of movement comes the idea of death. The hint of death in the imagery is strengthened by "froid." Yet, at the same time, the mention of dream implies an aspect of unreality in the death. The phantom is immobilized in the cold dream of disdain which clothes the useless exile of the Swan. Poetic creation is, in itself, a contradiction. In order to create the poet must be isolated, yet the isolation which is imperative also carries the threat of sterility and of eventual death.

This examination of Mallarmé's sonnet enables us to offer a certain hypothesis regarding the extent to which its creation was governed by the two cerebral hemispheres. As we know from earlier chapters, while rhythm is native to both hemispheres, rhyme is under the sole jurisdiction of the left. Furthermore, the complex syntactic structures found in the imagery can only be regulated by the left hemisphere, since the right has virtually no sequential linking ability. The frequent appearance of words such as "dur," "oublié," "vols," "souvient," "espoir," etc., which the right hemisphere cannot process or comprehend provides additional support for the left dominant theory. If we return for a moment to the table of cerebral dichotomies and compare it with Mallarmé's imagery, the evidence for left hemisphere dominance becomes stronger. We have seen throughout the reading that, while the poet utilizes suggestion and implication--elements often associated with intuition--the textual message in his imagery can only be decoded through intellectual, not intuitive methods.

The very fact that the more successful Mallarmé scholars take recourse to a chronological critical approach in order to facilitate their understanding indicates the development of a logical sequential system. The constant echoing throughout the imagery shows that far from being divergent, Mallarmé's images are convergent, always concerned with the same basic ideas or concepts. In addition, Mallarmé draws heavily on previously accumulated, organized information. For example, in order to appreciate the sonnet fully, the reader must not only be familiar with the commonly known attributes associated with the visual image of a swan, he should also be conversant with the possible relationship between the swan in the poem, and the "swan song" concept. One of the best known facts of cerebral dominance is the left brain = analytic and right brain = holistic processing mode. To attempt to comprehend Mallarmé's imagery, the reader is forced to approach it analytically drawing not only on all his past semantic relational experience, but also upon his knowledge of grammar, especially syntax. All-at-once or holistic processing of his images would, I firmly believe, be an exercise in futility, simply by virtue of the fact that he communicates through highly individualistic symbols which have to be decoded before they can be either understood or visualized. This decoding process precludes holistic comprehension.

Finally, Mallarmé uses words to transfer conceptions and/or ideations, he is not concerned with the transmission of altered perceptual modes. Indeed, when Mallarmé's poetry is studied and interpreted thoroughly by such critics as Mauron, the reader sees the very logical, left dominant or normative perceptions of the poet emerge from within the linguistic maze where Mallarmé had cleverly and beautifully concealed them.

VI. Futurism and Dada: Movements of Protest

Futurism, the movement which remains best known for its glorification of war, and for its subsequent association with Mussolini's political Fascism, developed as a radical reaction against Symbolism's abstraction of language and esoteric imagery.[273] When studied retrospectively in the calm of the classroom or a library, and away from the theatrics which glamorized futurist literature the movement produced very few meritorious literary works, but Futurism's advocates did provide many memorable evenings. More importantly, it anticipated forthcoming artistic rebellions. Before either Dada or Surrealism decided to attack convention--both in life and literature--Futurism had assumed this pugilistic stance:

> [The] doctrine of the Futurists formed part of a diffused state of mind and of a general and widespread tendency to attack the fine arts and the beauty which for two thousand years had inspired, consoled, and dignified humanity. In this work of destruction the Futurists had their predecessors, but they also exercised a notable and "beneficent" influence on those who came after them. They may have learned much from Lautréamont, Rimbaud, and Apollinaire . . . but they surely taught the Dadaists and the Surrealists.[274]

Critical opinion generally agrees with Clough that both Dada and Surrealism are indebted to Futurism. For example, the former adapted the Futurist Evening (serata futurista) which was a "combination of theatre, concert, political assembly, discussion and riot,"[275] while the surrealists benefited from the singular attention Futurism paid to language experimentation. The ideas expressed by the Futurists regarding the renovation of language, combined with Marinetti's emphasis on the concepts of parole in libertà (words in freedom) and immaginazione senza fili (imagination without strings), offers an explanation as to why critics have suggested that Surrealism both owes a great deal to and has much in common with Futurism.[276] Certainly, both Dada and Surrealism are futurists' godchildren in the spirit of revolt and discontent which created and directed Marinetti's movement, although Breton took strong exception to what he considered to be a puerile theory concerning the independent existence of words:

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[273] Jirina Táborská, "Futurismus," in Slovník literárních smeru a skupin. ed. Stepán Vlasín (Prague: Orbis, 1977), p. 79.

[274] Rosa Trillo Clough, Futurism: The Story of a Modern Art Movement A New Appraisal (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), p. 58.

> Il faut être le dernier des primaires pour accorder quelque attention à la théorie futuriste des "mots en liberté," fondée sur la croyance enfantine à l'existence réelle et indépendante des mots . . . On sait qu'à cette théorie comme à beaucoup d'autres non moins précaires, nous avons opposé l'écriture automatique.[277]

Marinetti's "Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista," which served as an introduction to the first anthology of futurist poetry, is the best known of this movement's treatises, and it offers a general outline of the futurist philosophy:

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[275] Caroline Tisdall and Angelo Bozzolla, Futurism (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), p. 12.

[276] G. Lista, "Marinetti et le surréalisme," in Surrealisme/Surrealismo (France: Nizet Paris, 1974), pp.121-49 and Gerald Mead, The Surrealist Image: A Stylistic Survey (Berne: Peter Lang, 1978), pp.14-7.

[277] André Breton, "Légitime Defense," Point du jour (1926; rpt. Paris: Gallimard, 1970), p. 43.

> 1. **Il faut détruire la syntaxe en disposant les substantifs au hasard de leur naissance.**
>
> 2. **Il faut employer le verbe à l'infini**, pour qu'il s'adapte élastique au substantif et ne le soumette pas au moi de d'écrivain qui observe ou imagine. Le verbe à l'infini peut seul donner le sens du continu de la vie et l'élasticité qui la perçoit.
>
> 3. **Il faut abolir l'adjectif** pour que le substantif nu garde sa couleur essentielle. L'adjectif portant en lui un principe de nuance est incompatible avec notre vision dynamique, puisqu'il suppose un arrêt, une méditation.
>
> 4. **Il faut abolir l'adverbe**, vieille agrafe qui tient attachés les mots ensemble. L'adverbe conserve à la phrase un fastidieuse unité de ton.
>
> 5. **Chaque substantif doit avoir son double**, c'est-à-dire le substantif doit être suivi, sans locution conjonctive, du substantif auquel el est lié par analogie. Exemple: homme-torpilleur, femme-rade, foule-ressac, place-entonnoir, porte-robinet.
>
> 6. **Plus de ponctuation**. Les adjectifs, les adverbes et les locutions conjonctives étant supprimés, la ponctuation s'annule naturellement, dans la continuité variée d'un style vivant qui se crée lui-même, sans les arrêts absurdes des virgules et des points. Pour accentuer certains mouvements et indiquer leurs directions, on emploiera les signes mathématiques X + : - = > , et les signes musicaux.
>
> 7. Les écrivains se sont abandonnés jusqu'ici à l'analogie immédiate. Ils ont comparé par exemple un animal à l'homme ou à un autre animal, ce qui est encore presque de la photographie. Ils ont comparé par exemple un fox-terrier à un tout petit pur-sang. D'autres, plus avancés, pourraient comparer ce même fox-terrier trépidant à une petite machine Morse. Je le compare, moi, à une eau bouillonnante. Il y a là **une gradation d'analogies de plus en plus vastes**, des rapports de plus en plus profonds bien que très éloignés.

> 8. **Il n'y a pas des catégories d'images**, nobles ou basses, excentriques ou naturelles. L'intuition qui les perçoit n'a pas de préférences ni de parti-pris. Le style analogique est donc le maître absolu de toute la matière et de sa vie intense.
>
> 9. Pour donner les mouvements successifs d'un objet il faut donner la **chaîne des analogies** qu'il évoque, chacune condensée, ramassée en un mot essentiel . . . Pour envelopper et saisir tout ce qu'il y a de plus fuyant et insaisissable dans la matière, il faut former **des filets serrés d'image ou analogies** qu'on lancera dans la mer mystérieuse des phénomènes.
>
> 10. Tout ordre étant fatalement un produit de l'intelligence cauteleuse, il faut orchestrer les images en les disposant suivant un **maximum de désordre.**
>
> 11. **Détruire le "Je" dans la littérature**, c'est-à-dire toute la psychologie. L'homme complètement avarié par la bibliothèque et le musée, soumis à une logique et à une sagesse effroyables n'a absolument plus d'intérêt. Donc, l'abolir en littérature. Le remplacer enfin par la matière, dont il faut atteindre l'essence à coups d'intuition, ce que les physiciens et les chimistes ne pourront jamais faire.[278]

Interestingly, the impact of the Futurists on twentieth century art and literature came not from their creative endeavors, but rather from the theories they expounded. Indeed, as Lista notes, their famous imaginazione senza fili was never realized in the poetic texts and remained confined to polemical treatises:

> En effet l'Imagination sans fils ne sera jamais réalisée et restera une hypothèse secondaire dans les manifestes marinettiens. Ce qui est fort compréhensible. Si le programme d'une écriture irrationaliste ne se réalise pas dans la directions de l'imagination alogique sous la dictée de l'inconscient, c'est parce que Marinetti, comme les peintres de son mouvement, en reste à la poétique du primitivisme futuriste, à savoir l'expérience de la réalité inédite des temps modernes . . .Si l'on

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[278] F.T. Marinetti, quoted by Giovanni Lista, Futurisme (1912; rpt. Lausanne: L'Age d'homme, 1973), pp. 133-35.

> relit le premier manifeste du 11 mai 1912, on constate alors que l'idée d'une "imagination sans fils" est totalement refoulée par une adéquation du motlibrisme à la nouvelle sensibilité humaine dominée par la simultanéité et la vitesse. Pour Marinetti, il s'agit de rendre par la perception analogique la synthèse de notre vision dynamique du monde. La destruction du je en littérature, au lieu d'ouvrir au langage les portes de l'inconscient, mène à un nouveau sujet, la matière.[279]

Perhaps the major reason why the futurists were unable to achieve _imaginazione senza fili_ in their creative endeavours is that they centered their language concerns on syntactical aspects. Through a breakdown of syntax they hoped to realize an eventual revival of language at the semantic level. They believed that abstraction in language was the result of syntactical structures, rather than of the semantic distancing (or increasing abstraction in language)which had made language more conceptually than perceptually oriented. Due to their belief that syntax was the source of problems with poetic expression, they intentionally suppressed it. However, this suppression necessitated the activation of the left hemisphere which is solely responsible for syntax control in language. Increased activity in the already dominant hemisphere naturally negates all possibility of reaching the usually subordinate right hemisphere where the processes which are referred to as "unconscious" are now thought to occur. Therefore, logically the "imagination without strings" of Marinetti's Manifesto could only be a left brain dominant phenomenom based on a combination of memory, imagination, fantasy, or tonal imagery. In order to make the left hemisphere dominance of the futurists' work more apparent, representative samples of imagery from from Marinetti's "Bombardment," which used parole in libertà shall be discusssed.[280]

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[279] Giovanni Lista, _Marinetti_ (Paris: Seghers, 1976), pp. 111-12.

ogni 5 secondi cannoni da assedio sventrare
spazio con un accordo **tam-tuuumb**
ammutinamento di 500 echi per azzannarlo
sminuzzarlo spargagliarlo all'infinito
nel centro di quei **tam-tuuuumb**
spiaccicati (ampiezza 50 chilometri quadrati)
balzare scoppi tagli pugni batterie tiro
rapido Violenza ferocia regolarità questo
basso grave scandere gli strani folli agita
tissimi acuti della baattaglia Furia affano
orecchie occhi
narici aperti attenti
forza che gioia vedere udire fiutare tutto
tutto **taratatatata** delle mitragliatrici strillare
a perdifiato sotto morsi schiafffi **traak**
traak frustate **pic-pac-pum-tumb** bizz
zzarrrie salti altezza 200 m. della fucileria
Giù giù in fondo all'orchestra stagni
diguazzare buio buffali
pungoli carri pluff plaff impen
narsi di cavalli flic flac zing zing sciaaack
battaglioni bulgari in marcia crooooc-craaac
tutto=taratatata delle mitragliactrici strillare
verde mandre *don-dan-don-din-bèèè* **tam-tumb**
tumbtumb-tumb-tumb-tumb-[281]

This is the first text to be dealt with in this thesis where the actual visual appearance is, initially, the most striking feature.[282] The reader immediately notes the spatial location of the words, the irregular use of capitalization and the absence of punctuation. While this unusual presentation is disconcerting, the variation in spacing and capitalization techniques is, in itself, a form of punctuation. Emphasis is placed on each word according to the space around it and according to whether or not it is capitalized. Rather than destroying the concept of order in language, Marinetti replaces one convention in communication with another of his own choosing.

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[280] Although too long to be presented in its entirety, typical passages are reproduced.

[281] T. Marinetti Teoria e invenzione futurista (1914; rpt. Italy: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1968), pp. 693-96.

[282] Although there are other texts with more pronounced

The poem consists, for the greater part, of a listing of a series of impressions of a bombing. The images created are based solely on external stimuli, and rather than showing the development of a theme, a progression which increases understanding, Marinetti presents various images frozen in time as a complete, but static picture of the bombing. The poem clearly depends upon auditory or accoustic properties for much of its effect, and when reading the text, the fact that sound is used to emphasize sense becomes readily apparent. For example, the sounds of the words reinforce the message transferred by the semantic properties of the words. The predominantly harsh sounds reflect the harshness of the action; the cracking of the cannons is echoed in the cracking of the words. The reinforcement of sense by sound is also obvious in the more extreme examples of sound plays. The different sounds of wartime bombings are presented and contrasted with the sounds of daily life, from

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[222](cont'd) irregularities, their unique typesetting makes it impossible to effect proper reproduction.

the biting of the machine gun, to the plodding of the cattle, to the marching of the battalions. The auditory considerations in the last lines differ from the others cited in that they are not existant as discursive semantic units. They do not add to the communicative value of the poem, but merely function as arbitrary "synonyms" for the words. For example, the sound "taratatata" acquires the semantic paradigm of the discursive word "mitragliactrici." The sounds do not indicate any reduction in left brain, analytical activity. Instead, they become words in their own right, with meanings that are just as strictly regulated as those of the original signs. They are not, therefore, free words, but new words.

Moreover, by accentuating the auditory effects to such an extent, rather than possessing greater liberty, these words are, if anything, more limiting than traditional or highly discursive words which may transfer ideas of touch, smell, or sight. The words and the images are being employed for the sole purpose of describing the war machine. They are bound by both sound and context to the bombardment, the glorification of the bombardment by the poet. By being so mimetically bound to external reality, they really become nothing more than onomatopaeic noises or idiosyncratic neologisms.

Dada

The history and philosophy of the Dada movement have been well documented in such monumental works as *Dada à Paris*, *The Dada Painters and Poets*, and *Dada: art et anti-art*. In addition, the Dadaists themselves composed many manifestos stating their goals and methods, including Tristan Tzara's famous manifesto of 1918.[283] Nevertheless, the specific defining qualities of dadaist imagery continue to float in a nebulous critical haze and literary discussions center more upon theory than upon the texts themselves.

A question raised is why, despite the plethora of theoretical works written on Dada firstly by the Dadaists, and secondly by literary critics, there is still such a muddle surrounding both the value and the interpretation of dadaist "literature." The root of the problem may well lie in the fact that much of Dada was never intended to be literature *per se*, but rather was extended as a philosophical statement. Willy Verkhauf stated the problem very succinctly when he wrote:

> As a movement dada existed for but a few years and was a contribution to the undecided problems of our century, many of which the dadaists recognized at their sources, albeit intuitively rather than through reasoning. The difficulty of presenting dadaism as a movement may be gauged from the fact that as soon as one studies it more closely it becomes apparent that it has never actually existed

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[283] Manuel Grossman, *Dada: Paradox, Mystification, and Ambiguity*. (New York: Pegasus Press, 1971), p. 109. In his book Grossman also recalls the debate over whether or not Tzara actually was the originator of the word Dada and the author of the 1918 manifesto.

> as a movement, neither as an organization nor as a tendency in art. Nor did it have any clearly circumscribed principles...the only thing they really had in common was their battle cry "dada."[284]

Another argument which calls into question the validity of considering Dada as a literary movement--a term implying some degree of cohesiveness--is found in Mary-Ann Caws' discussion:

> Dada speaks violently against the real and against others; the Dada gesture starts from the absolute denial of any common basis in human mentality or perception, of any community of believers. The Dada work is the interior transposition of a highly individual personality, whose language cannot operate under logical exterior norms.[285]

An additional contributing factor to the general state of confusion surrounding Dada is the tendency of some critics to lump dada and surreal writing together as part of the same movement. There are similarities between the two movements, for both Dada and Surrealism lay heavy stress on the parallel notion of spontaneity (automatism, chance revelations of language and experience, refusal of the logical straitjacket, etc.) and moral commitment (revolt against bourgeois attitudes and literary modes). Both center their hope for the remaking of the world in the analogical process--the bringing together of elements from distant spheres, as in Pierre Reverdy's celebrated definition of the startling image, and the connection of the disparate by the conduit of poetic vision--and in the magic power of language.[246] However, while Dada, like Surrealism, was "convinced of the inadequacy of language, the dadaists made their own kind of poetry out of a shout or a curse,"[247] which was not the case in Surrealism.[248]

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[284] Wiily Verkauf, *Dada: Monograph of a Movement* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), p. 7.

[285] Mary-Ann Caws, "Dada's Inner Language as an Outer Manifestation" in *Cahiers Dada 4* (France: Lettres modernes, 1971).

Dada, as a literary experience, is best known for its propensity towards spectacle, contradiction, and confusion. That it was more than a conglomerate of strictly literary techniques, that it was, indeed, a way of feeling, is evidenced by the peculiar actions and reactions of its exponents who clearly went out of their way to create the appearance of anarchy as, for example, during riotous performances at the Cabaret Voltaire.[249] The overwhelmingly contradictory nature of Dada is exemplified in Tzara's statement that, "The true Dadas are against Dada."[250]

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[246] Caws, "Dada's Inner Language," p. 6.

[247] Peterson, *Tzara*, p. xv.

[248] When dada and surrealist imagery are studied together before being examined separately, as in Mary Ann Caws' book *The Poetry of Dada and Surrealism*, there is a decided inclination to ignore the points of contrast and to observe only the readily apparent similarities of juxtaposition of unrelated words, seeming irrationality, and emphasis on auditory values or word plays. While this approach is the least problematic way of analyzing the imagery, it fails to differentiate between the types of experiences and perceptions offered by the two movements. Such critical approaches only further obfuscate already hermetic imagery.

[249] Hans Richter, *Art and Anti-art*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), pp. 12-32.

[250] Grossman, *Dada*, p. xvi.

Undertaking a study of dadaist writings which is based on the assumption that the texts produced by the dadaist group have, in the vast majority of cases, something in common, may be proceeding from an erroneous supposition. As a political, sociological, and philosophical statement, Dada was cohesive; as a literary activity, it was not, except, perhaps, to the extent that the devastation of language in its writings reflected the devastation of the world that spawned it.

Bearing in mind the predominantly negative attitudes of the dadaists, and their hostile approaches to all traditional literature, a major point which must be dealt with is whether, aside from the obvious theoretical and philosophical contributions, the literature produced by the dadaists is even worthy being of examined, or is it merely to be treated as a gigantic hoax perpetrated by a group of malcontents? The answer to this question appears, at first, to be as contradictory as Dada itself, for the response must be both no and yes. Clearly, many of the creative texts left by Dada for posterity have no literary merit, since neither perceptual nor conceptual considerations are evident, and studied confusion leads not to creativity, but rather to artistic stagnation via _l'anti-art_ _pour_ _l'anti-art_. However, Dada, when studied as a conglomerate of experimental techniques, did contribute to the development of unique imagery types:

> Despite the confusion and anarchy, a great deal was accomplished: fresh insights on the creative process

> not only produced literary and artistic works of real value, but also led to such innovations as automatic writing (later claimed as their own invention by the surrealists) and phonetic poems (an early form of lettrism)[291]

These technical innovations resulted in the production of image clusters whose meaning and value were to be decided upon by the individual reader.

There are, in essence, two major streams of Dada, one which true to the Dadaist spirit, self-destructed, and one which metamorphosed into Surrealism. The second current, which is of more interest here, has provoked the statement that, "there is a surrealist aspect of Dada and a Dadaist aspect of Surrealism."[292] Hans Richter, himself a part-time Dadaist, noted a difference in the Dada tendencies:

> Tzara exploited the same chance factors as did Arp, but while Arp made conscious use of his eye and brain to determine the final shape, and thus made it possible to call the work his, Tzara left the task of selection to Nature. He refused the conscious self any part in the process. Here the two paths Dada was to follow are already apparent.[293]

Dada's reductionist attitude towards the value of man as artist or creator is seen in its most blatant form in Tzara's recipe for a poem.

> Prenez un journal.
> Prenez des ciseaux.
> Choisissez dans ce journal un article ayant la
> longeur
> que vous comptez donner à votre poème.

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[291] Michael Impey and Brian Swann in their introduction to First Poems (New York: New Rivers Press, 1976), p. 9.

[292] Michel Sanouillet, Dada à Paris (Paris: Pauvert, 1965), p. 428.

[293] Hans Richter, Dada: Art and Anti-art (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), p. 60.

> Découper l'article.
> Découpez ensuite avec soin chacun des mots qui
> forment cet article
> et mettez-les dans un sac.
> Agitez doucement.
> Sortez ensuite chaque coupure l'une après l'autre.
> Copiez consciencieusement dans l'ordre où elles ont
> quitté le sac.
> Le poème vous ressemblera.
> Et vous voilà un écrivain infiniment original et
> d'une sensibilité charmante, encore qu'incomprise du
> vulgaire.[294]

As we see from this text, Tzara eventually arrived at the point where he undermined the basic conventions of poetry by removing all possibility of analytical choice on the part of the poet. Scissor poems fail to reflect the thoughts, emotions, experiences, or perceptions of the writer. If they had been the sole legacy left by the dadaists, the movement would have given nothing to literature. Although, in fairness, Dada imagery may intrigue certain readers and much enjoyment can be had trying to find a meaning which can be decoded by the left hemisphere in images which were probably intended to be total nonsense.

Tzara in an anonymous note introducing a selection of his poems wrote: "Mettez tous les mots dans un chapeau, tirez au sort, voilà le poème dada. Il mentait."[295] This typically contradictory statement combined with the Dadaists' experimentation with various techniques, some borrowed from the Futurists and Cubists (simultaneous poetry and bruitism), and others which were more or less their own inventions (free association, pensée qui se fait dans la bouche, and polyglot poetry), suggest that, from time to time, there were individual attempts at creative rather than consistently destructive activity. Unfortunately the results of these endeavours are often lost or ignored when Dada is examined solely as a nihilistic or anarchistic rebellion.

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[294] Tristan Tzara, *Littérature*, No. 15 (July-August), 1920; rpt. Peterson, *Tzara*, p. 91.

[295] Gordon Frederick Browning, *Tristan Tzara: The Genesis of the Dada Poem or from Dada to Aa* (Stuttgart: Akademischer Verlag Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1979), p. 3. *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie française* (Paris: Editions Kra, 1928), p. 423.

The first stream of Dada endeavour contains "texts" which do not communicate any ideas or perceptions either in the literal or figurative language modalities. Although the reader's patience will not be taxed by an analysis of such writing, since these texts can only be understood as philosophical statements, I am presenting excerpts from two such texts in order to make the contrasts them more apparent. The first comes from Ball's famous "O Gadji Beri Bimba:"

> gadji beri bimba glandridi laula lonni cadori
> gadjama gramma berida bimbala gladnri galassassa
> laulitalomini
> gadji beri bin blassa glassala laula lonni cadorsu
> sassala bim
> Gadjama tuffm i zimzalla binban gligia wowolimai bin
> beri ban
> o katalominal rhinocerossola hopsamen laulitalomini
> hoooo gadjama
> rhinocerossola hopsamen
> bluku terullala blaulala looooo...[294]

While a critic might, as a purely academic exercise, analyze this text from a linguistic perspective, counting the number of sibilants or interdental fricatives, the resulting statistics would not be particularily illuminating. Another example of this deliberately non-communicative and nihilistic branch of dadaist endeavour is found in Tzara's collected works:

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[294] Hugo Ball, quoted by Richter in Dada: Art and Anti-art (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), p. 42.

hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle
hurle hurle hurle
hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle
hurle hurle hurle
hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle hurle
hurle hurle hurle

This line is repeated twenty-one more times and the text finally concludes with:

"Qui se trouve encore très sympathique."[297]

Tristan Tzara did, however, engage in more positive experiments during his Dada period. He believed that there were two types of poetry; the type he advocated and practiced was poetry as an activity of mind; the second, the more traditional form, he called poetry as a means of expression.[298] Chance played an important role in the concept of poetry as an activity of mind, for chance was seen as a liberating factor in what the Dadaists felt was the stagnation of creative processes. In order to exploit chance they employed the techniques of "pensée qui se fait dans la bouche" and "écriture automatique." Since ideally when using these methods man becomes only a medium for production, subservient to chance, there is often no evidence of normative discursive communication. Frequently, standard syntactical structures disappear, and semantic displacement is common. Naturally, therefore, the reader finds these images to be incoherent and discordent as we see with Tzara's dadaist poem "Maison Flake."

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[297] Tristan Tzara, *Oeuvres complètes* (France: Flammarion, 1975), p. 387.

[298] Grossman, *Dada*, p. 20.

déclenchez clairons l'annonce vaste et hyaline
animaux du service
maritime
Forestier aérostatique tout ce qui existe chevauche
en galop de clarté
la vie
l'ange a des hanches blanches (parapluie virilité)
neige lèche le chemin et le lys vérifié vierge
3/25 d'altitude un méridien nouveau passe par ici
arc distendu de mon coeur machine à écrire pour les
étoiles qui t'a dit "écume hachée de prodigieuses
tristesses-horloge"
t'offre un mot qu'on ne trouve pas dans le larousse

quelle vapeur d'un tube de foudre pousse
la nôtre contre l'éternelle et multiform voile
ici on n'assassine pas les hommes sur les terrasses
qui se colorent de la succession intime des lenteurs

nous tentons des choses inouies
mirages in-quarto micrographies des âmes
chromatiques et des images
nous portons tous des grelots-tumulte que nous
agitons
pour les fêtes majeures sur les viaducs et pour les
animaux

tournure d'une danse en octave sur météore et violon
le jeu des glaces annéee qui passe
buvons un coup j'suis l'frère fou
encre du ciel lac d'hydromel
de vin opaque flake en hamac

pratique l'offrande tranquille et féconde
il gratte le ciel avec ses ongles
et le gratte-ciel n'est que son ombre
en robe de chambre

l'année sera parmi les palmiers et bananiers jaillis
du halo en cubes d'eau
simple productive vaste musique surgissant à bon

> port
> et le pain cramoisi à la future et multiple saison
> des vieilles gravures des rois à la chasse joliment
> coloriées
> pipe et boxe dans le vase sous l'as de pique pipier
> avec les oiseau et les nus frîches un bateau alerte
> dans le bec
> du roc moteur aux étincelles des bonnes nouvelles la
> tour eiffel
> joue au rebec
> ici chaque chaise est molle et confortable comme un
> archevêque
> entreprise d'ascétisme moines garantis à tous les
> prix-mesdames ici
> maison flake[299]

A major problem in Dada criticism is that critics state generalities, but do not arrive at specifics. The familiar techniques from other poetry are isolated and what critical commentary there is often proceeds from this point. Occasionally, vague critical statements are more poetic than the texts themselves as we observe in this judgement of "Maison Flake:"

> On first impression, this poem, like so many of Tzara's works, seems to be little more than a jumble of discordant words and images. But if one is willing to make the necessary connections, a new conception of life--like Plato's universe--gradually begins to emerge out of this teeming chaos. Out of the Futuristic trappings of modern civilization--the "typewriter," "skyscraper," and the viaducts--the image of a Dadaist paradise, where the imagination is as free as it should be, is born.[300]

While the following examination does not assume to be either conclusive or comprehensive, it should enable us to discern more precisely what--if indeed any--perceptual modes were involved in dadaist literary endeavours.

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[299] Tristan Tzara, Oeuvres complètes I (France: Flammarion, 1975), pp. 133-34.

[300] Grossman, Dada, p. 126.

Firstly, from the visual perspective, the text "Maison Flake" is ordinary and offers few of the typographic variations seen in Futurist, Cubist and the first current of Dadaist poetry. The only three notable deviations from more traditional forms are the lack of punctuation, the lack of capitalization, and the very unequal line length. Within the first stanza the reader finds a mixture of imagery types and language modalities. For example, the first image "déclenchez clairons l'annonce vaste et hyaline animaux du service maritime" evidences both syntactic fracturing ("déclenchez clairons l'annonce") and semantic incompatibility ("hyaline animaux de service maritime"). In addition to signalling a departure from normative communication, this combination immediately jars the reader's sensibilities. The language operates in the figurative modality and can only be approached through inferential processes. The image type involved in the communication is that of fantasy which is still under left hemisphere control.

One of the most salient problems involved in Dada imagery is apparent in this image--specifically that of syntactical considerations. Despite the Dadaists' desire to "free" language, when they disrupt the normative structures which order communications they immediately encourage or actually insist that the reader initiate his own sequential linking processes. The reader is forced to try to reorder the communication to make it conform to the grammatical rules to which he has become accustomed, and which enable him to communicate successfully with others. Alternatively, he may choose not to interfere with the integrity of the text through reordering measures, but may take recourse to free association in his attempt to comprehend the imagenic message transfer. However, contrary to the ideas promoted by pop psychology, I should like to suggest that the term "free association" as it is generally employed does not necessarily imply any reduction in normative logical left brain cognitive functioning. Rather it has its base in the relational semantic expectations which the reader has acquired throughout his experiential encounters with both life and literature. Automatic association is not synonymous with unconscious association, or with increased right hemisphere activity. The very fact that language acquisition skills are located in the left hemisphere indicates that language emission, be it automatic (immediate), or normative (delayed) is still under the control of the dominant hemisphere. Further, the dadaist suppression of normative language structuring, like that exhibited in futurist imagery suggests high left hemisphere involvement, both conceptually and perceptually, in imagenic creation.

The second image "forestier aérostatique tout ce qui existe chevauche en galop de clarté la vie" is a splendid example of the juxtaposition of unrelated fragments, in which we again find syntactic dislocation and semantic incompatibility. The third line which reads "l'ange a des hanches blanches (parapluie virilité)" introduces the sound imagery for which the dadaists are famous. Strangely enough, the first part of the image, had it been found in a more traditional setting, would not present a problem with interpretation. This image can be "understood" quite facilely in both the literal and the figurative modes; it can be interpreted both contextually and inferentially. It falls into the left dominant category of imagination imagery, for it is possible that the poet had perceived pictures of angels and that he subsequently recreated them in this text. However, the words "parapluie virilité" again disrupt normative communication and the reader is, once more, left to unscramble the code. Umbrella virility could be read as a phallic umbrella, or as a fantasy image with symbolic overtones or it could, equally well, have been created with the scissor technique. The following image, "neige lèche le chemin et le lys vérifié vierge" continues the emphasis on whiteness. By extrapolation, it also involves the ideas of purity and chastity, with the references to snow, lily, and virgin. The image of snow licking the road operates within the figurative modality with the personification of snow, and is an imagination image. The second image in the line again employs personification, but in this case the image type is that of fantasy, since the reader cannot analytically construct a referential framework wherein a lily is verified as a virgin.

The last image to be examined in the first stanza is "arc distendu de mon coeur machine à écrire pour les étoiles." It appears to operate within the figurative communicative modality, and an inferential decoding of this fantasy image yields a possible reading of "my heart/spirit is at the service of the stars/universe, or I record the stars."

Let us now look at the first line of the third stanza which states "nous tentons des choses inouies." This communication operates in the literal modality and can be understood contextually. It offers no perceptual (either visual or auditory) experience and is simply a conceptual statement of fact.

The fourth stanza begins with "tournure d'une danse en octave sur météore et violin." This communicates within the figurative modality and is a fantasy image. The communication is highly suggestive evoking pleasant emotional responses, before the analytical process of decoding takes over. In addition, partially because of its relatively normative syntactical patterning, the reader is more easily able to form a visualization of the message. Indeed, such a visualization may actually preceed (or appear simultaneously with) the semantic decoding processes, even though the visual experience is disquieting because of the unaccustomed superimposition of objects which we usually consider totally antagonistic.

The following image "le jeu des glaces année qui passe" has auditory effect as its most prominant feature, and ambiguity is accentuated, particularily with the sign "glaces" which has various acceptable meanings. The normal semantic decoding process is disrupted and the reader has no way of determining which meaning is the correct one from the contextual clues provided. He may attempt to decode it through free association, but this would result only in an acceptable interpretation, not in a demanded one e.g. the ice/mirror game years which pass or everything is only a transitory reflection. The image is sound dominant or is an accoustic image since sound appears to control the creative process.

The last image we will examine is "buvons un coup j'suis l'frère fou." The second half evidences slight semantic deviations, but these could be attributable to the first half. It appears to be a mimetic statement with regard to the slurring of speech that often accompanies drinking. The rhyming also evidences verisimilitude in light of the fact that after imbibing alcohol, certain individuals are apt to indulge in facile verse. However, this line is interesting in another respect, for there is a strong indication that the poet was actually directed more by sound values than by an analytic choice to create a rhyme, so that it might be an example of pensée qui se fait dans la bouche. This hypothesis is based on the alliterative joining of "frère" and "fou," since a more logical and equally simplistic rhyme could have been produced by using "saoul."

Although this is not an exhaustive analysis of "Maison Flake" the salient features of this branch of dadaist endeavour are, no doubt, apparent to the reader. In recapitulation, one notes that there is a multiplicity of language modalities and image types within the same poem, same stanza, and sometimes even the same line. This great diversity of modes and types is characteristic of the Dada movement. Rather than relying on specific image types, Dada, in its search to disrupt normal communication, employs antagonistic imagery (e.g., images which do not break syntactic rules juxtaposed with images which do). As a result, there is the unusual combination of highly evocative imagery with lines that are nothing more than statements of fact or intent. In fact, it is this peculiar combination which largely accounts for the difficulties involved in the explication of dadaist texts, for the reader is constantly required to leap from one communicative modality and image type to another. The lack of continuity in language results in another important feature of dadaist writing, for it completely obliterates any chance of a lengthy progression of symbolism. Another contributing factor to the lack of continuing symbolism is the tendency of Dada to create images which are not comparative or analogic in nature, but rather which are juxtapositons of fragments.

In conclusion, the suggestion could be made that, to a large extent, dadaist poetry is poetry *à thèse*, for it is primarily used as a tool for the propagation of dadaist philosophy. It is a highly self conscious poetry despite its emphasis on chance and basic automatism. Because it is so self-centered and indulges more than explores, any element of universality contained within the lines is subjugated to the individual poet's passing moods or fancies. Dada was a "société pour l'exploitation des idées" and unlike the movements which preceded it or those which came after, it was not concerned with expanding the boundaries of perception. Indeed for Tzara language, not the perceptual modes from which it was derived, was "the ultimate barrier to complete mental freedom and knowledge."

VII. André Breton: The Man; The Manifestos

The future leader of the surrealist movement, André Breton, was born to Louis and Marguerite Breton in the small town of Tinchbray, Normandy on February 18th, 1886.[301]

In 1901 Breton was enrolled in the Sainte-Elisabeth school which was run by a religious order. In 1904, he went on to the parish school of Pantin where, according to reports, he was a good student,[302] and by 1906 he was registered at the Lycée Chaptal in Paris to which he commuted by train everyday. During this period of his life, his parents were strongly urging him to go into the naval service--a suggestion which he rejected flatly and firmly. They then wanted him to enter the Polytechnique or the Ecole des Mines. However, being little disposed towards mathematics these careers did not interest him either. Before his graduation from Chaptal in 1912, his professor Albert Keim initiated him into the complexities of modern poetry.[303]

André Breton began his medical studies at the Sorbonne in 1913, and while studying the science program (physics, chemistry, and natural sciences) he began to realize that his first vocation was poetry. In fact, in retrospect he "désignera 1913 comme l'époque où sa véritable personalité commence à apparaître."[304]

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[301] Marguerite Bonnet, André Breton: Naissance de l'aventure surréaliste (Paris: Librairie Jose Corti, 1975), p. 12; G. Legrand, Breton (Paris: Les Dossiers Belfond, 1977), p. 26.

[302] Legrand, Breton, p. 29.

[303] Legrand, Breton, p. 31.

In February of 1915, Breton was called up by the army and assigned to the 17th Artillery Regiment. By the end of June he was in Nantes as a medical orderly assigned to the field hospital. During this time, Breton's mind was dominated by thoughts of the brutality of war, and his only escape was his correspondence with a school-friend Fraenkel, and with Paul Valéry whom he had met in 1914. The misery of this year was also somewhat alleviated when Jacques Vaché, who had been wounded in Champagne, was sent to the hospital where Breton was stationed, and a friendship was struck during Vaché's convalesence. They spent most of their time together until Vaché's departure for the North Front in January of 1916.

Shortly thereafter, Breton was sent to the neuro-psychiatric center of Saint-Dizier as an assistant to Dr. Raoul Leroy, Chief of Medicine at Ville Evrard[305], a former assisant to Dr. Charcot.[306] While working with Dr. Leroy, Breton first had the opportunity to see psycho-pathology in practice as well as in theory. Breton was avidly reading all of the basic works available on the subject and during this period of perusal he discovered Sigmund Freud, although the discovery was second-hand since the translation of Freud's works into French did not begin until 1921.[307] Breton was also deeply influenced by the French professor of psychiatric medicine, Dr. Pierre Janet, whose writings were more readily accessible to the French speaking medic. Indeed, an argument could be made that Janet's contributions to the development of Breton's ideas and understanding in the psychoanalytic field have been vastly under-rated, most particularly since Janet was one of Jung's instructors and was instrumental in his early development. The statement has even been made that "the resemblance between Jung's notion of the collective self and the surrealists' concept of what Paul Eluard was to call 'Les Dessous d'une vie' is due to the fact that they both derive from Pierre Janet, whose character as a psychologist was quite different from Freud's."[308]

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[304] Anna Balakian, André Breton: Magus of Surrealism (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971), p. 16.

[305] Balakian, André Breton, p. 27.

[306] Legrand, Breton, p. 36

One of Janet's works was a book entitled L'Automatisme psychologique (first published in 1889 and reprinted in 1921) in which he discussed the therapeutic use of automatic writing while bearing in mind the implications of such therapy for normal consciousness--implications which Freud had, for the most part, ignored. Stated briefly, Janet believed that there was an area of mind in which conscious will played no part and which remained hidden to the average person, unless, for some reason, such as insanity or excessive tension, it surfaced and interfered with conscious thought patterns. In the case of the insane, he postulated, this interference could not be appreciated or understood, because the patient was not aware of what was happening. However, for others, it could reveal what the patient feared, desired, or needed. While the sane person is usually denied access to this dimension of mind, Janet suggested that occasionally one might reach these recesses if one would but "let the pen wander, automatically, on the page even as the medium interrogates his mind."[309] This clearly is the same basis for automatic writing as Breton advocated. Janet also suggested--a suggestion later adopted by Breton--that although this practice of automatism is accidental in the insane, it could be induced in certain individuals without the aid of exterior stimuli (e.g. drugs). In Janet's writings and in Breton's assimilation of them, psychic automatism becomes a tool to break through the wall between man's conscious and unconscious minds. In our terms it could be considered as an attempt to bridge the corpus callosum and unite the left and right hemispheres' perceptual modes. Psychic automatism becomes both a catalyst and a guide in the surrealists' exploration of the unknown.

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[307] Legrand, Breton, p. 36.

[308] Balakian, André Breton, p. 28.

1917 was an important year for Breton literary career, for it was then that he saw Vaché again, met Philippe Soupault for the first time, and made contact with Pierre Reverdy who founded the review Nord-Sud and who published some of Breton's poems.

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[309] Pierre Janet, L'Automatisme psychologique (1889; rpt. Paris: Felix Alcan, 1921), p. 464.

Near the beginning of 1918, Aragon introduced Breton to Lautréamont's work Les Chants de Maldoror, an event which prompted Breton to consider and revise many of his ideas on modern poetry.[310]

1919 was a busy year for the young poet, as he together with Aragon and Soupault founded the review Littérature. The review acted as an experimental poetic platform, particularily for Dada. This was also the year when Breton met Paul Eluard with whom he would later work closely. The second issue of Littérature contained the text of "Poésies" by Lautreámont which Breton had labouriously copied from the only known volume, contained in the Bibliothèque Nationale. In June Breton saw the publication of Mont de Piété, a collection of his own selected essays. Later in the year, he co-authored the work Les Champs magnétiques with Phillipe Soupault, fragments of which were published in Littérature. In retrospect, Breton referred to this as the first surreal endeavour.

In 1920 Tzara arrived in Paris and moved in with Picabia. Shortly thereafter André Breton participated in the first Dada demonstration at the Palais des Fêtes. Later in the year there was a severe break between Breton and his family precipitated by Breton's refusal to continue studying medicine. His mother is reported to have said that she would rather he had died on the battlefield,[311] and his father even petitioned Valéry to intervene. After a long conversation with Breton, Valéry took it upon himself to find work for the young poet which would allow him to support himself. He found him a job copy-editing at Gallimard, but Breton had little interest and apparently litle aptitude for the task. An example of his extreme carelessness can be found in the comments Proust made in a letter to Soupault:

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[310] Legrand, Breton, p. 39

[311] Legrand, Breton, p. 42.

> ...j'ai vu que mon prochain livre, pourtant relu par Monsieur Breton, contenait tant de fautes que si je ne dressais pas un erratum, j'en serais déshonoré. Il m'a pris plus de huit jours, compte 23 pages (au moins tel que je viens de l'envoyer), j'ai relevé plus de 200 fautes. Encore à la moitie du livre me suis-je arrêté, vaincu par la fatigue. Ce travail m'a interdit toute correspondance, et il est pourtant très incomplet. Surtout que M. Breton ne prenne pas cela pour un reproche...[312]

Breton passed the next few years in predominantly literary, specifically Dada, activities. In October of 1921, while on vacation in Tyrol, he went to Vienna to visit Freud. This unplanned meeting was not notably successful due to the combination of Freud's lack of French and ignorance of modern art,[313] and to Breton's lack of German and innate impatience.

By 1922 Breton was frustrated with dadaism and after making an unsuccessful bid for the leadership--a bid supported by Aragon--which resulted in the famed Congrès de Paris, he virtually withdrew from the group. The friction created by the bad feelings which surfaced at this congress contributed to the eventual disintegration of the Dada experiment in Paris. This year also marks the beginning of Breton's experimentation with hypnotic trances and dreams.

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[312] M. Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris* (Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1965,) p. 559.

[313] Legrand, *Breton*, p. 44.

In 1923 Breton published *Claire de terre* which may be considered as the first totally surreal work with even its title evidencing the famous surrealist word plays. This is also the year from which one can date the constitution of the surrealist group containing Breton, Aragon, Eluard, Ernst, Soupault, Alexandre, Baron, Crevel, Desnos, Morise, Vitrac and Peret.

The following year Breton published *Les Pas perdus* and a short time afterward began to work on the *First Manifesto*. This document, central to Surrealism, marks the official birth of the movement. In it Breton delineates the goals, philosophy, and methods of surrealist endeavours and theories, many of which had existed previously in an uncodified form. Unfortunately, as Matthews astutely points out "it marked, too, the opening of the surrealist hunting season, which seems likely to continue so long as there are sportsmen to be found blessed with inaccurate aim and blank cartridges."[314]

The *First Manifesto* is the best known of the surrealist documents and, from the theoretical perspective, one of the most enlightening. Written under the aegis of Freud and

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[314] J.H. Matthews, "Fifty Years Later: *The Manifesto of Surrealism*", *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (1975), p. 2.

Janet, it explains the tenets central to the surreal creative endeavours. In it, Breton attempts to show the vast scope of Surrealism by presenting a sometimes verbose argument supporting his contention that the movement was not intended merely as a reform in literature, but rather as a reformation of the mental processes of the writer and, by extrapolation, the reader.

The first major concept to be introduced, albeit as a corollary of the central idea of increased mental freedom, is the idealization of childhood and the related perceptual modalities. The reason behind this idealization is the belief that during early childhood the imagination--which Breton believes is killed by contact with the logically oriented outside world--is still free. Therefore, children, unlike adults, have unfettered powers of perception. This, in turn, grants them a liberty unknown to older people. Freedom, or more precisely, the search for grerater freedom, is the true basis of Surrealism. Indeed, Breton wrote "Le seul mot de liberté est tout ce qui m'exalte encore."[315]

Since Breton believes that people cannot regain the lost powers of imagination and perception through any logical or analytical process, he turns his attention towards those whom society has classed as insane. His statements on these people tend to support the interpretation that he believes those who are commonly called "mad" are really those who have a totally liberated imagination. He even seems to envy aspects of their illness when he writes that, "Et, de ce fait, les hallucinations, les illusions, etc., ne sont pas une source de jouissance négligeable" (p. 15). (Although this viewpoint is, in itself, extreme, a fashionable school of existential psychiatrists led by R.D. Laing has advanced and argued for the acceptance of the same basic idea.) Actually, Breton's and Laing's definition of poetic inspiration seems to be madness under sporadic control.

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[315] André Breton, *Les Manifestes du surréalisme* (1924; rpt. Paris: Gallimard, 1972), pp. 12-13. All other references are to this edition.

Breton believes firmly in the multiplicity of perspectives and in the infinite possibilities for linking these perspectives; he is strongly opposed to the prevailing realistic attitude that, in his opinion, stultifies both art and science. Commenting on man's insatiable desire to group things together rather than to perceive and appreciate their uniqueness he writes:

> Si un grappe n'a pas deux grains pareils, pourquoi voulez vous décrire ce grain par l'autre, par tous les autres, que j'en fasse un grain bon à manger? L'intraitable manie qui consiste à ramener l'inconnu au classable, berce les cerveaux. (p. 17)

The use of the word "manie" is of marked interest, since intentionally or unintentionally, by employing the term "mania" Breton implies that the present day emphasis on the analytical is as much a mental illness as is, for example, a psychotic's hallucination. The constant search for rational analysis becomes an obsession which stifles the sentiments and destroys the individual, allowing him to consider only logical facts:

> Nous vivons encore sous le règne de la logique, voilà, bien entendu, à quoi je voulais en venir. Mais les procédés logiques, de nos jours, ne s'appliquent plus qu'à la résolution de problèmes d'intérêt secondaire. Le rationalisme absolu qui reste de mode ne permet de considérer que des faits relevant étroitement de notre expérience. (pp.18-19)

Because of the lack of imagination induced by this absolute rationalism, "l'expérience même s'est vu assigner des limites" (p. 19).

Breton formally introduces Freud into his discussion by acknowledging the contribution the psychiatrist made to the development of surrealist theories:

> C'est par le plus grand hasard, en apparence, qu'a été récemment rendue à la lumière une partie du monde intellectuel, et à mon sens de beaucoup la plus important, dont on affectait de ne plus soucier. Il faut rendre grâce aux découvertes de Freud. (p. 19)

Interestingly, Breton's hommage to Freud has been responsible for much of the misdirection of surrealist criticism, since more attention has been paid to the psychotherapeutic and interpretive psychological aspects of the disordered personality than to the psychiatrist's theories on language.

> This general theory of the unconscious and the conflicts of the unconscious was very important for the Surrealists, but probably not as important as a second aspect of Freudian theory. This second aspect is to be found in Freud's ideas on language. Early in his career, Freud became convinced that the unconscious could be studied primarily through language, that is, that the structures and the conflicts, as well as the problems of the unconscious, were expressed or revealed at times in a person's language. Not directly, of course, and not at all times, but under certain conditions . . . the censoring mechanisms of the conscious mind were

> relaxed or distracted, and the disguised, deformed, irrational voice of the unconscious was heard.[316]

Both psychiatrist and poet strongly believed in the ability of language to fulfill communicative imperatives. However, Freud's interest in language centered on pathological manifestations. For him, it was an instrument through which he hoped to cure patients, to make their conceptual and perceptual experiences conform to society's expectations. For the Surrealists, language was a weapon against precisely these expectations:

> Like Freud, but in contrast to the attitude of both the Symbolists and the modernists, the Surrealists felt that language--the very language we had all learned and used everyday--was totally adequate to its task of revealing the forces and the desires of the unconscious. However, whereas for Freud these discourses--dreams, free association, slips of the tongue, etc.--were only a means to get at the unconscious, a language that had to be interpreted, deciphered and translated, the Surrealists were convinced that these discourses were themselves the truth.[317]

Dreams, memory, and the relationship between them also figure prominantly in the Manifesto. Breton asserts that dreams offer the only evidence of memory which is not subjected to selective influences, stating that they are, therefore, the most accurate evidence of the continuous functioning of mind. Considering that during the dream state, the activity of the usually dominant left hemisphere is reduced so that the right may play a greater role, Breton may well have been quite correct in his statement. At the same time, he shows that he recognizes the value of the conscious, analytic mind by saying, "C'est à très juste titre que Freud a fait porter sa critique sur le rêve" (p. 20). In today's terms, Breton appears to be arguing for "whole brain thinking."

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[316] Gerald Mead, "Language and the Unconscious in Surrealism," Centennial Review, 20, No. 3 (1976), p. 285.

[317] Mead, "Language and the Unconscious," p. 288.

A key concept in Surrealism is that of "le merveilleux," which Breton originally mentions in connection with dreams, although he chooses not to elaborate to any great extent on their relationship. However, his brief discussion does make clear the fact that he believes the marvelous is totally freed from temporal restraints: "Le merveilleux n'est pas le même à toutes les époques; il participe obscurément d'une sorte de révélation générale dont le détail seul nous parvient..." (p. 26). His faith in the power of the marvelous is best summarized in his words: "le merveilleux est toujours beau, n'importe quel merveilleux est beau, il n'y a même que le merveilleux qui soit beau" (p. 24). The surrealists believe that exploration or exploitation of the image can help them glimpse "le merveilleux."

Breton, deeply influenced by Pierre Reverdy's ideas on imagery and their possible assistance in experiencing the marvelous, quotes his fellow poet in the Manifesto:

> L'image est une création pure de l'esprit.
> Elle ne peut naître d'une comparaison mais du rapprochment de deux réalités plus ou moins éloignées.
> Plus les rapports de deux réalités rapprochées seront lointains et justes, plus l'image sera forte--plus elle aura de puissance émotive et de réalité poétique...(p. 31)

He willingly admits that the aesthetic of such imagery eluded him until one evening between the sleeping and waking state a strange image rose in his mind. He describes the hypnagogic experience saying:

> En vérité cette phrase m'étonnait; je ne l'ai malheuresment pas retenue jusqu'à ce jour, c'était quelque chose comme: Il y a un homme coupé en deux par la fenêtre, mais elle ne pouvait souffrir d'équivoque, accompagnée qu'elle était de la faible représentation visuelle d'un homme marchant et tronçonné à l'axe de son corps. A n'en pas douter il s'agissait du simple redressement dans l'espace d'un homme qui se tient penché à la fenêtre (pp. 32).

Breton recognized the value of the image for poetic construction and after granting it this status, he found that the initial image was then succeeded by a series of others surfacing without his conscious control. Wishing to investigate this phenomenon further, Breton decided to adapt psychiatric methods of investigation to his own needs and attempted to obtain, from himself, a monologue--as closely akin as possible to spoken thought--written without any inhibitory influences from his critical faculties. This decision had led him in 1920, in conjunction with Philippe Soupault, to write the first co-authored automatic text, Les Champs magnétiques.

In honour of Guillaume Apollinaire, who had used the term as an adjective in 1917, Breton and Soupault baptized this new means of poetic inspiration "Surrealism," which Breton defined:

> SURREALISME, n. m. Automatisme psychique pur par lequel on se propose d'exprimer, soit verbalement, soit par écrit, soit de toute autre manière, le fonctionnement réel de la pensée. Dictée de la

> pensée, en l'absence de tout contrôle exercé par la raison, en dehors de toute préoccupation esthétique ou morale.
>
> ENCYCL. Philos. Le surréalisme repose sur la croyance à la réalité supérieure de certaines formes d'associations négligées jusqu'à lui, à la toute-puissance du rêve, au jeu désintéressé de la pensée. Il tend à ruiner définitivement tous les autres mécanismes psychiques et à se substituer ~~à~~ eux dans la résolution des principaux problémes de la vie. Ont fait acte de SURREALISME ABSOLU MM. Aragon, Baron, Boiffard, Breton, Carrive, Crevel, Delteil, Desnos, Eluard, Gérard, Limbour, Makine, Morise, Naville, Noll, Péret, Picon, Soupault, Vitrac. (pp. 37-38).

In the next section entitled "Secrets de l'art magique surréaliste," Breton discusses the development of surrealist discourse more specifically noting that the first sentence will come automatically, untouched by critical activity, but that the others which follow are, most likely, influenced by normative perceptual and conceptual processes which we now know to be governed by the dominant hemisphere:

> La première phrase viendra toute seule, tant il est vrai qu'à chaque seconde il est une phrase étrangère à notre pensée consciente qui ne demande qu'à s'extérioriser. Il est assez difficile de se prononcer sur le cas de la phrase suivante; elle participe sans doute à la fois de notre activité consciente et de l'autre, si l'on admet que le fait d'avoir écrit la première entraîne un minimum de perception. (p. 43)

Clearly, even the automatic writing process involves both "minds," and thus there is evidence of the dialectical interaction which Breton and other surrealists sought.

As his next major consideration in the First Manifesto, Breton discusses language and objecting to its role in circumscribing experience states that, "Le langage a été donné à l'homme pour qu'il en fasse un usage surréaliste"

(p. 46). Antonin Artaud, another leading surreal theorist, also believed that the attack against rationality would have to be preceded by an attack against normative language itself. When publishing the first account of the Bureau for Surrealist Research, he announced that he writes only for "aphasiques et en général tous les descrédités des mots et du verbe."[318] He wished to grant to words only the importance which they have in dreams.[319]

Breton and later others were advocating a form of linguistic revolution which, properly employed, leads to perceptual exploration. Not surprisingly, he contended that surrealist language is best adapted to dialogue form, for this is when two (or more) thoughts have the best opportunity to confront one another, to act and to react. Unlike ordinary dialogue, however, in which one mind takes up the thoughts expressed by the other and is expected to respond in a certain fashion (giving non-sequitur responses can result in a diagnostic verdict of insanity), in surreal dialogue the language is freed from semantic expectations created by already established language frameworks. With surrealist dialogue, as Breton idealistically envisions it, language frees the mind from the interference caused by the need to adhere to social expectations and succeeds in removing the threat of the imposition of one mind over another, for "[l]es mots, les images ne s'offrent que comme tremplins à l'esprit de celui qui écoute" (p. 49). Surrealist language mitigates communicative conformity.

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[318] Antonin Artaud, "L'Activité du bureau de recherches surréalistes," La Révolution surréaliste, No. 3 (April, 1925), p. 31.

[319] Antonin Artaud, "Le Théatre et son double," Oeuvres complètes IV (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), p. 112.

Breton next turns his attention towards the spontaneous nature of the surreal image, arguing that "Il en va des images surréalistes comme de ces images de l'opium que l'homme n'evoque plus" (p. 50). The surreal image cannot be summoned at will and has nothing to do with "conscious" or analytic creativity. Breton asserts that automatic writing, which is at everyone's disposal, is conducive to the creation of such images:

> On peut même dire que les images apparaissent, dans cette course vertigineuse, comme les seuls guidons de l'esprit. L'esprit se convainc peu à peu de la réalité suprême de ces images. Se bornant d'abord à les subir, il s'aperçoit bientôt qu'elles flattent sa raison, augmentent d'autant sa connaissance. Il prend conscience des étendues illimitées où se manifestent ses désirs, où le pour et le contre se réduisent sans cesse, où son obscurité ne le trahit pas. Il va, porté par ces images qui le ravissent, qui lui laissent à peine le temps de souffler sur le feu de ses doigts. C'est la plus belle des nuits, _la nuit des éclairs_: le jour, auprès d'elle, est la nuit (p.52).

Breton states that the great variety of surrealist images precludes a complete classification of them in the _Manifesto_, and provides only a vague guideline for describing them. His decision not to discuss this issue more completely and precisely is the major reason behind the critical conundrum in which we find ourselves today:

> Pour moi, la plus forte [image] est celle qui présente le degré d'arbitraire le plus élevé, je ne le cache pas; celle qu'on met le plus longtemps à traduire en langage practique, soit qu'elle recèle une dose énorme de contradiction apparente [Le rubis

> du champagne. Lautréamont], soit que l'un de ses termes en soit curieusement dérobé [Beau comme la loi de l'arrêt du développement de la poitrine chez les adultes dont la propension à la croissance n'est pas en rapport avec la quantité de molécules que leur organisme s'assimile. Lautréamont], soit que s'annonçant sensationnelle, elle ait l'air de se dénouer faiblement (qu'elle ferme brusquement l'angle de son compas) [Une église se dressait éclatante comme une cloche. Philippe Soupault], soit qu'elle tire d'elle-même une justification formelle dérisoire [Dans le sommeil de Rose Sélavy il y a un nain sorti d'un puits qui vient manger son pain la nuit. Robert Desnos], soit qu'elle soit d'ordre hallucinatoire [Sur le pont la rosée à tête de chatte se berçait. André Breton], soit qu'elle prête très naturellement à l'abstrait, le masque du concret, ou inversement [Un peu à gauche, dans mon firmament deviné, j'aperçois--mais sans doute n'est-ce qu'une vapeur de sang et de meurtre--le brillant dépoli des perturbations de la liberté. Louis Aragon], soit qu'elle implique la négation de quelque propriété physique élémentaire [Dans la forêt incendiée/Les lions étaient frais. Roger Vitrac], soit qu'elle déchaîne le rire [La couleur des bas d'une femme n'est pas forcément à l'image de ses yeux, ce qui a fait dire à un philosophe qu'il est inutile de nommer: "Les céphalopodes ont plus de raisons que les quadrupèdes de haïr le progrès." Max Morise] (pp. 52-53).[320]

Breton spent the next five years of his life exploring and developing the ideas set down in the First Manifesto. They were both turbulent and productive years for the young poet. In 1925, he took over the direction of La Révolution surréaliste from Naville and Péret because he felt that the surrealist political and social protests in the review were becoming unnecessarily sensational. This sensationalism, he believed, would detract from Surrealism's ability to carry out its prime directive of exploration for knowledge. He wanted to use the platform that the journal offered to explore politics, to develop techniques applicable to art and poetry and to examine the evolution of a new concept of sexuality.[321]

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[320] I have taken the liberty of juxtaposing the classifications with the examples, although in the original text they were separate.

Early in 1926, while in Marcel Duhamel's home, he helped to invent the game Cadavres exquis which soon became a popular surrealist pastime. Shortly afterwards he published "Légitime Défense" which was a very critical essay dealing with politics and culture. In it he reaffirmed his belief in the principle of revolutionary action. It was about this time that Breton met Nadja, a meeting which had such a great impact on him that he later put it down in novel form. This was also the year that Breton, with the support of Aragon and Péret, expelled both Soupault and Artaud from the surrealist enclave. Breton's pontifical bearing combined with his tendency to expell those who were not devout followers of his doctrines resulted in his being granted the ironical title of Pope of Surrealism, and logically, these expulsions became popularily known as excommunications.[322]

The year 1928 marked the publication of Nadja and Le surréalisme et la Peinture, both of which have become classics of Surrealism. The Second Manifesto was published in 1929 in the last issue of La Révolution surréaliste. This manifesto was, to a large extent, an expansion of the ideas expressed in the First Manifesto, accompanied by several rather vituperative polemical passages in which he criticized those who could not or would not live up to the standards he set.[323]

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[321] Balakian, André Breton, p. 77.

[322] Balakian, André Breton, p. 74

The Second Manifesto is more socially oriented than the First Manifesto, probably due to Breton's involvement with the Communist Party. In it, Breton's version of the major problems that man encounters during his life, rather than the specifics of poetic expression, become the central issue.

The text opens with the inclusion of two documents in which various members of the psychiatric profession take strong exception to Surrealism in general, and to Breton in particular. One statement found in the novel Nadja especially upset them, since they apparently felt that it unnecessarily increased the amount of danger already inherent in their work. Their feeling of uneasiness was accentuated by the fact that the patient who had lent them the book had underlined the pertinent words:

> Je sais que si j'étais fou, et depuis quelues jours interné, je profiterais d'une rémission que me laisserait mon délire pour assassiner avec froideur un de ceux, le médecin, de préférence, qui me tomberaient sous la main. J'y gagnerais au moins de prendre place, comme les agités, dans un compartiment seul. On me ficherait peut-être la paix (p. 72).

The interest that Breton had in psychiatry, specifically in the dichotomy between sanity and insanity, as evidenced in the early appearance of these documents in the Manifesto is reinforced throughout the text by repeated references to madness.

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[323] The contents of these diatribes serve more the illuminate the vindictive side of André Breton's personality than to aid in understanding the movement.

Breton defends himself against the obviously hostile doctors by asserting that, above all else, Surrealism is an attempt to provoke, from the intellectual and moral viewpoints a crise de conscience (p. 76). By forcing the individual to undergo this crisis, Surrealism hopes to liberate him from the fetters of society, firstly by making him recognize the falsity of the antimonies planted and nurtured by those who could benefit from the individual's state of mental limbo, as well as by those who are simply blind to the existence of the problem. In one of the most important statements made in this Manifesto, Breton stresses the superficiality of dichotomies:

> Tout porte à croire qu'il existe un certain point de l'esprit d'où la vie et la mort, le réel et l'imaginaire, le passé et le futur, le communicable et l'incommunicable, le haut et le bas cessent d'être perçus contradictoirement. Or c'est en vain qu'on chercherait à l'activité surréaliste un autre mobile qu'espoir de détermination de ce point (pp. 76-77).

Surrealism assumed the mammoth task of trying to reintegrate man with himself, by bringing to light an allegedly concealed or ignored unconscious dimension of mind. In order to attain this reconciliation, Surrealism, initially, aims at:

> ...la récuperation totale de notre force psychique par un moyen qui n'est autre que la descente vertigineuse en nous, l'illumination systématique des lieux cachées et l'obscurcissement progresssif des autres lieux, la promenade perpétuelle en pleine zone interdite et que son activité ne court aucune chance sérieuse de prendre fin tant que l'homme

> parviendra à distinguer un animal d'une flamme ou d'une pierre--le diable préserve, dis-je, l'idée surréaliste de commencer à aller sans avatars (p. 92).

Breton proceeds to discuss his notion of the similarities between the Hegelian dialectic system and Surrealism. He believes that part of this movement's function is to examine critically the notion of oppositions (e.g. reality--unreality, reason--irrationality, etc.). Breton stands in strong opposition to the contention that dialectics can only be applied to social problems:

> Toute l'ambition du surréalisme est de lui fournir des possibilités d'application nullement concurrentes dans le domaine conscient le plus immédiate. Je ne vois vraiment pas, n'en déplaise à quelques révolutionnaires d'esprit borné, pourquoi nous nous abstiendrions de soulever, pourvu que nous les envisagions sous le même angle que celui sous lequel ils envisagent--et nous aussi--la Révolution: les problèmes de l'amour, du rêve, de la folie, de l'art et de la religion (pp. 95-96).

After a logorrheic diatribe centered on what Breton believed to be acts of human betrayal, he returns to the more literary-oriented realms when he relates such problems as betrayal to problems in communication:

> Le problème de l'action sociale n'est, je tiens à y revenir et j'y insiste, qu'une des formes d'un problème plus général que le surréalisme s'est mis en devoir de soulever et qui est celui de l'expression humaine sous toutes ses formes (p. 108).

According to Breton, language is a reflection of the functioning of mind, and surrealists contend that the mind must be freed before social liberation as he envisions it can occur. The use which surrealist poetry makes of words is seen as a major step in the process of liberation, for this imagery breaks down the stifling barriers of logic by effecting an emotive shock. In turn, this shock permits the reader of a surrealist text to "experience" --albeit briefly--without the interference of rational restrictions. of evaluating ideas. He relegates

In subsequent pages, Breton turns his attention toward the complicated issue of inspiration. Once again employing the analogy of conductors found in the First Manifesto, he argues that there is no way of mistaking this experience:

> Nous la reconnaissons sans peine à cette prise de possession totale de notre esprit qui, de loin en loin, empêche que pour tout problème posé nous soyons le jouet d'une solution rationelle à cette sorte de court-circuit qu'elle provoque entre une idée donnée et sa répondante (écrite par exemple)..." (p. 120).

Breton insists on the vital importance of automatic writing and dream recording in the quest to find this inspiration, for these techniques serve as the means of transportation from the incarceration of reality to the freedom of surreality. Towards the end of this Manifesto, Breton draws an interesting analogy between alchemy and surrealist utilization of language, for both seek to transform and renew. Surrealism is not casual experimentation:

> Et qu'on comprenne bien qu'il ne s'agit pas d'un simple regroupement des mots ou d'une redistribution capricieuse des images visuelles, mais de la recréation d'un état qui n'ait plus rien à envier à l'alienation mentale: les auteurs modernes que je cite se sont suffisamment expliqués à ce sujet (pp. 136-37).

Alchemy is a particularily apt metaphor for surrealist poetics because, as Inez Hedges notes, it provides an analogy for what was earlier described as "the creation of new frames--a qualitative jump of perception similar to the alchemist's aspirations to create gold out of 'base' materials."[324]

From the morass of ideas found in the Manifestos, two central concerns are of paramount importance. The first and the best known, language--particularily automatic language--has been the subject of the most intensive critical studies. Indeed, automatic imagery, through a practice of critical metonomy which assumes a part for a whole, has virtually become synonomous with Surrealism, even though by the time that Breton wrote L'Air de l'eau (1934) he had already abandoned the technique. Automatic writing and language games, while the most celebrated of the surrealists' methods for gaining access to the usually ignored minor hemisphere, were only a part of the movement's programme, and they were not, as I shall endeavour to prove, necessarily the most successful of the surrealists' experiments. Perception, or more precisely altered perceptual modalities, such as one finds in dream states, hypnapompic, hypnogogic experiences, etc., played a role in the production of surrealist imagery which has been far under-rated in much, but fortunately not in all, literary criticism on Surrealism:

> Surrealist perception transforms the poet and artist; but the surrealist work was also intended as a catalyst that would transform the reader or

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[324] Inez Hedges, Languages of Revolt (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1983), p. xx.

> perceiver, enabling him or her to accomplish the radical mental act--an inherent part of the surrealist aesthetic.[325]

The importance of the visual component in written surrealist imagery was recognized by Paul Eluard in a discussion on poets and painters when he noted that "Ils suivent tous le même effort pour libérer la vision. . . de dualisme entre l'imagination et la réalité."[326] Indeed, for Eluard, as I believe for most surrealist poets, the visual had supremacy over the verbal.

> Ils savent qu'il n'y a rien d'autre que communication entre ce qui voit et ce qui est vu, effort de compréhension, de relation--parfois de détermination, de création. Voir c'est comprendre, juger, déformer, oublier, ou s'oublier, être ou disparaître.[327]

Anne Hyde Greet appreciated the visual quality in much of Eluard's imagery, commenting that ". . . most important, the poems we have considered, like all Eluard's poems for painters, are designed to be at once read and seen--or envisioned."[328] Roger Cardinal also acknowledged the close relationship between the visual and the verbal in surreal imagery when he stated that "The surrealist verbal image translates itself with admirable literalness into the visual sphere."[329] In an earlier article Cardinal discussed more fully his ideas on verbal and visual images:

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[325] Hedges, Languages, p. 4.

[326] Paul Eluard, Oeuvres complètes I (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), p. 516.

[327] Paul Eluard, Oeuvres, p. 516.

[328] Anne Hyde Greet, "Paul Eluard's Early Poems for Painters," Forum for Modern Language Studies Vol. 9, No. 1 (1973), p. 87.

> On the one hand, there is evidence of a divergence between image and word at various points: the word will take over from the image the better to express an idea; it may even contradict the image, or at least instigate new developments that supersede it. The two sides of the paper then have an antagonistic rather than a reciprocal relation. On the other hand, there is evidence of convergence whenever pictorial forms can be seen to behave like verbal forms . . . such affinities may support the hypothesis of a common primary stimulus, neither essentially verbal nor pictorial, a stimulus that derives from an intimate creative matrix of inarticulate forms.[330]

From these few quotations combined with André Breton and Paul Eluard's statements on the role of perception in the surrealist doctrine, we can readily observe the central--perhaps paramount--importance of perceptual modalities for surrealist imagery. We can appreciate the need for critical studies which concentrate not merely on language examinations, but ones which also attempt to ascertain more precisely the relationship between language and perception. To this end, I would now like to examine surreal imagery from the perspective of perceptual modalities with the hope that this study will help to increase our understanding of this most perplexing phenomeon--the surreal image.

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[329] Roger Cardinal, "Surrealist Beauty," Forum for Modern Language Studies, Vol. 10, No. 4 (1974), p. 355.

[330] Roger Cardinal, "Image and Form in Schizophrenic Creation," Forum for Modern Language Studies, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1973), p. 119.

VIII. Surreal Imagery: André Breton

Automatic writing, a unique phenomeon and one which has caused a great deal of confusion, was the first weapon employed by the surrealists to destroy the barriers between visual and verbal experiences, between perception and conception. By breaking down the conventional semantic system inherent in normative communicative modalities, the surrealists hoped to provoke new perceptions, thus revitalizing both experience and language. In contrast to the usual practice of projecting language onto the physical world, the surrealists' practice of automatic writing projects language into the individual's perception of that world.

Since Freud proposed the idea that automatic responses reveal the "unconscious" (or, as we describe it the right brain), automatic writing has frequently been treated by literary critics and casual readers alike as if it were a pathological manifestation. Consequently, the imagery is approached from a pseudo-therapeutic stance. Indeed, as the situation of surrealist criticism stands, it often appears as if we, as critics, are engaging in the obviously futile task of attempting to effect a post mortem diagnosis and cure of individual poets rather than objectively trying to identify the imagery. The application of such critical approaches to Surrealism's automatic texts are a direct affront to the goals of the movement. Breton and others had wanted language to directly reflect experience. I seriously doubt if they would have appreciated having others, under the guise of interpretation, reword or explicate their images in such a manner as to make them conform to the very normative modes which they were trying to annihihate.

A refreshingly objective study which examines automatic writing from a linguistic perspective has recently been published by Inez Hedges. Using a componential theory of semantics which allows for the encoding of words according to a limited set of semantic features, she identifies those grammatically matching rules which are characteristically violated in automatic writing. The model she proposes is based on an analysis of Breton's and Soupault's "Eclipses."

subject-verb matches
--of a human attribute to a verb requiring a human subject ("sentiments blanch")
--of a non-living noun to a verb requiring a living subject ("the cloud comes running," "balls of cotton give birth")
--of a non-substantial noun to a verb requiring a substantial subject ("theories dance")
--of a non-human (but human-sized) noun to a verb requiring a human subject ("smoke-fumes arrange a rendez-vous")
--of an animal to a verb requiring a human subject ("an insect forgets himself")

noun-adjective matches
--of a non-durative adjective with a durative noun ("relative sighs")
--of an adjective normally attibuted to a human with a non-human (but human-sized) noun ("melancholy seconds," "sentimental clouds")
--of an adjective normally attributed to a living thing with a non-living noun ("breathless record")
--of a non-mental adjective with a mental noun ("current dreams")
--of an adjective normally attributed to spatially extended nouns with a noun lacking spatial extension ("obscure silences")

possession
--of a substantial by an insubstantial ("organs of joys," "promontory of our sins")
--of a living attribute by a non-living thing ("murmurs of stars")
--of a human attribute by a non-human ("cares of parasites")
--of a large object by a smaller one, except in the case of humans ("church of lobster")

"is clauses"
--equation between a non-human and a human noun ("the dream is a villain")
--equation between a non-living noun and a living part ("the star is an eye")
--equation between a non-substantial noun and a substantial one ("the bouquet is an abuse")
--equation between a concave noun and a convex one ("the hole is an organ")[331]

With the aid of several colleagues, Hedges developed a computer program which could simulate surrealist automatic writing through a process of semantic mismatching. Examples of the computer's "poetic" endeavours are found below:

1. The chateau's approval dazed the languid spider.
2. An imperceptible fish came. He dissected a limber spider.
3. The story's madman talked, but a ready candalabra fell.
4. A story's madman winked. A spider's body fell, and a reader began.[332]

The very fact that a computer program has been written which can produce images indistinguishable from those produced by surrealist poets raises a serious question regarding much of the scholarship to date on surreal imagery and the unconscious, since computers are obviously left hemisphere machines, not noted for their holistic perception. The successful development of this program clearly indicates that, in the case of automatic writing, critical attention must be focused on effect, and not as is common practice, on the poet's subconscious or unconscious conceptual processes, since a computer possesses neither subconscious nor unconscious "mind." It also, I believe, shows that attempts to "decode," or "interpret" this imagery in accordance with Freudian or Jungian psychology are, in fact, misdirected and an unintentional affront to the surrealists' endeavour. Attempts to explicate the imagery produced by automatic writing often result with the critic taking recourse to symbolic interpretations wherein one word is understood to stand for another or a combination of others. When conventional frames are broken, critics/readers often force words to assume symbolic values as they scramble to modify the components in the new frame to conform with their expectations of established frame patterns, instead of accepting the words literally and striving to construct new frameworks.

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[331] Inez Hedges, _Languages of Revolt: Dada and Surrealist Literature and Film_ (Durham: Duke University Press, 1983), pp. 93-94.

[332] Hedges, _Languages_, pp. 94-95.

Let us now turn our attention towards a sampling of "automatic images" to ascertain how the language modalities involved in such communications operate and how these images may be read.

In 1920, Breton, with Philippe Soupault, published the co-authored automatic text Les Champs magnétiques[333] from which the following examples were selected at random.

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[333] André Breton and Philipppe Soupault Les Champs magnétiques (1920; rpt. Paris: Gallimard, 1967. All other references are to this edition.

1. Prisonniers des gouttes d'eau, nous ne sommes que des animaux perpétuels (p. 13).

The first part of this image "Prisonniers des gouttes d'eau" communicates through the figurative language modality, but the reader cannot comprehend it through either contextual or inferential reading processes. Therefore, in order to decode the image he may utilize free association to arrive at a totally individualistic interpretation. The signs in the image do not evidence feature compatibility, for a message cannot be decoded from the image through analytical processes. For example, there is not rational relationship between "prisonniers" and "gouttes d'eau." Since the idea of being a prisoner is normally linked with the concepts of being incarcerated in a space or being a prisoner of an emotion, the framework expectations are disrupted and we cannot decode the message conceptually through either contextual or inferential readings. If the reader is prepared to abandon his conceptual approach to language he may visualize people incarcerated in drops of water, perhaps struggling to free themselves. After this perception, he may proceed to try to decode the message for its content or its conceptual base which once again involves the use of free association. The second part of the image can, on the other hand, be read inferentially and thus can be said to communicate figuratively. Through analytic processes, the reader could interpret this statement to mean that people, despite all their pretensions are still nothing more than animals.

Because the first part of the image ("Prisonniers des gouttes d'eau") induces visual processes before conceptual processes--largely due to the preponderance of concrete nouns--it promotes the formation of visual imagery in the reader. The second half of the image is pliable to normative analytic readings, possibly due to the word "perpétuels" which is an abstract noun and can only be processed by the left hemisphere. Thus, while the first could be said to evidence reduced left hemisphere activity, the second suggests a resurgence of activity in this hemisphere. The actual reduction in normative communication modalities was not sustained, but because of the shock effect of the first half, the second could also be mistaken for non-normative communication.

Actually, I should like to draw the reader's attention to the possibility that while the first half evidences "surreal" or non-normative perception, the second half could be seen as an explication offered by the left hemisphere of the perception. The verbal left hemisphere attempts to make some sense of the perception and "seeing" prisoners in drops of water logically concludes that man has been reduced to the level of a form of bacterium.

> 2. Quelquefois, le vent nous entoure de ses grandes mains froides et nous attache aux arbres découpés par le soleil (p. 13).

The second image offers an example of personification of the wind. The first half communicates figuratively and can be understood inferentially, indicating that it is left hemisphere dominant. Through the use of these inferential processes, the reader may arrive at the relatively simple message that the "nous" are out on a cold, windy day and the gusts of wind seem to wrap around them almost pinning them to the trees. The problem surfaces with the word "arbres découpés par le soleil." However, if the reader stops decoding conceptually, and begins to employ perceptual techniques when he responds to the image, he may "see" the sun's rays literally block out the tree top. In other words, the image is best understood when read visually (literally), not verbally (figuratively). After the initial visualization the reader may then attempt to relate this image to those which surround it. At the same time, however, I should like to emphasize that perception is a continuous process, and it is quite possible that after one perception has been expressed, the poet instantaneously moves on to another forcing the reader to travel with him.

> 3. Il faut donc étouffer encore pour vivre ces minutes
> plates ces siècles en lambeau (p. 14).

In this instance, the image cannot be decoded either contextually or inferentially which indicates that it communicates in neither the literal nor the figurative modalities. In order to attempt to decode the image the reader has little choice but to take recourse to free association. This means, of course, that the poet is no longer actively directing the reader's interpretation of the image.

One possible reading is that suffocation is inescapable because of the boredom of everyday life. The use of encore implies that suffocation is an ongoing experience, perhaps one which the human being must endure. There is an element of time disruption in the image with the words "ces siècles en lambeau." Interestingly, these words may also evoke a strong visual image of different scenes from different centuries jumbled together in a collage.

> 4. L'eau de Javel et les lignes de nos mains dirigeront le monde (p. 15).

The most striking feature of this image on initial reading is its absurd humor. There is obvious opposition in the image between the natural world, as represented by the lines in the hand, and the technological one, as represented by Javel. Although the actual message is totally illogical, it can be read contextually and therefore communicates figuratively. Visually the reader may form a truly delightful image of a Javex bottle and a hand setting off on a crusade to conquer the world. If, however, he wishes to try to decode the image inferentially, which I believe could result in over-reading, an interpretation like the following could be attained. The lines in the palm have long been considered to be indicative of life patterns, a method of telling both the past and the future; bleach is part of the modern, chemical world, and is a relatively recent invention. The appearance of the "eau de Javel" as a symbol for the world today is striking, for it suggests both the bitterness (acidity) of modern existence and the bleached or faded quality of man's life.

Finally, the idea might be put forth that this image represents a changing concept of beauty, since it comes after the line, "Belles nuits d'août, adorables crépuscules marins, nous nous moquons de vous!"

> 5. Nous leur avons donné notre coeur qui n'était qu'une chanson pâle (p. 15).

This image possesses a high potential for evoking an emotional response from the reader, even though it clearly fulfills neither contextual nor inferential demands and therefore cannot be said to communicate in either the literal or the figurative mode. Whatever message may be contained within the image cannot be decoded within frameworks developed through rational thought patterns which are based on referentially verifiable knowledge of the characteristics and laws which govern the universe as we know it. The visual plays a relatively minor role in this image, with the result that the process of free association becomes important. The *effect* on the reader is to help break down the established semantic frameworks as the reader goes ever farther from the original Source Signs.

The reader may also form a strong visual picture which combines, or actually superimposes a soft outline of musical notes with a pale colored heart.

> 6. La fenêtre creusée dans notre chair s'ouvre notre coeur (pp. 19-20).

Clearly, this image fulfills neither contextual nor inferential demands. Whatever message may be contained in the image cannot be adapted to fit into even the most extended normative framework. Initially, the reader may attempt to decode the image through free association. This process could result in a reading where the word window brings to mind the idea of transparency, and of clarity. Yet because the window is hollowed, there is an equally strong indication of absence, loneliness, injury, etc. However, considering the image as a whole, rather than in parts, it would appear to be more positive than negative, for the image of a hollow window could imply that the last barrier to total freedom has been removed. The flesh, which is normally governed by all the restrictions and expectations of society, can now see and perhaps join the heart. It is as if eyes (part of the physical body) were emptied of past misconceptions and were free to look at or into the heart.

Alternatively, and I believe more accurately, the reader could attempt to form a visual perception of the image wherein a hollow window in the flesh is actually seen to be opening a heart. After the formation of this visualization, the reader could start to explore possible conceptual interpretations of the image.

> 7. Les clairères des forêts maritimes et des ports connus sont trop parfumées (p. 54).

This image cannot be decoded contextually or inferentially within the established linguistic frameworks, even when such frameworks are extended, so once again the reader may employ associative processes. Reading associatively, he will note the reference to water with the words "maritimes" and "ports." The contrast between the natural and the artificial shows one of the contradictions common to surreal imagery.

However, should he be willing to accept the image as referring to a perceptual modality which does not conform to normative expectations, and simply visualize without attempting to justify the perception, he will be able to form a mental image through homospatial processes. This new way of "seeing" could then lead him to conceptualize heretofore undisclosed relationships between the maritime clearings and familiar perfumed ports.

8. Je sais que derrière nous on ne peut que pâlir de frayeur (p. 65).

This sentence communicates both literally and figuratively and can be readily comprehended without extension of normative frameworks. Interpreted literally, it simply indicates that the writer is aware that someone behind him can only be pale with fright.

If explicated figuratively, it could be read as a surrealist statement of fact, for the surrealists were frightened in an obscure way by the past, by the entrapment which they believed lay behind them. The statement could also be interpreted as referring to the fear suffered by those who do not have the courage to undertake the surrealist experience. There is some intimation of a forward movement on the part of at least some, since the image implies a group lagging behind the "nous." Finally, sudden palor from fright is a common physical manifestation of fear; the mention of which in a supposedly automatic text indicates one of two things: firstly, that the left hemisphere is also aware of this physical reaction or secondly that there is some mediation occurring between the left and right hemispheres. The latter may well be the more probable explanation.

> 9. L'amour au fond des bois luit comme une grande bougie (p. 80).

This image communicates figuratively and can actually be understood inferentially. Consequently, the reader is not required to construct new frameworks, but merely to extend previous ones which he has used to interpret imagery found in a more traditional setting.

For example, by employing inferential decoding processes, the reader could decide that there is a relationship between the love and the ideas of light and a feeling of warmth. One reading could be that love in darkness or loneliness (fond des bois) lights up life like a large candle illuminates a room.

> 10. Ma jeunesse en fauteuil à roulettes avec des oiseaux sur le manche de l'avenir.

Since this image cannot be decoded within the expected linguistic frameworks, the reader must either attempt to decode it through free association or through visualization techniques. Because of the abstract nature of the words "jeunesse," and "avenir" the image is difficult to read visually, and free association appears to be the most promising way to try to decode it. When read associatively, the image displays as its most notalbe feature an indication of the possible conciliation of apparent contradictions. There is the clear implication of a youth confined to a chair. Yet at the same time, there is an equally strong suggestion of freedom of movement, even of flight, with the image of birds posed on the handle as if about to take flight. Although one must acknowledge that there is no direct evidence of free movement, there is definitely the potential for it. There is also a linkage between the dichotomies of past and present with the covert implication of a youth, probably passed, and the overt use of "avenir." In addition both past and future are are mediated by the present--this mediation coming primarily from the use of the present tense. The youth in the chair still exists and this youth might stand for a societally conditioned mind, but through a hidden transformation, he might regain his mobility, his freedom to fly. One could even extrapolate that this transformation is achieved via the surreal experience.

The reader's attention will now be directed towards images drawn from Claire de terre, a collection of poems published in 1923.[334]

> 1. Plutôt la vie que ces prismes sans épaisseur même si les couleurs sont plus pures" (p. 72).

Contrary to the general opinion that all imagery found in collections labelled "surrealist" evidences semantic incompatibility which cannot be reconciled through extension of normative linguistic frameworks, this image communicates figuratively and can easily be interpreted inferentially as suggesting that life is more desirable with all its imperfections than are "prismes sans épaisseur." Basically, this fantasy image states that the experiences which life offers are more valuable than beauty without depth.

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[334] André Breton, Claire de terre (1923; rpt. Paris: Gallimard, 1966). All other references are to this edition.

Since the image can be read through sequential, analytic processes, its effect is to stimulate the verbal left rather than the visual right hemisphere.

2. "Plutôt la vie qu'une Enfance vénérable" (p. 73). This line communicates figuratively and can be interpreted using inferential processes. There is virtually no stimulus which encourages the reader to form any visualization, and the statement is definitely conceptually oriented. Through inferential interpretations, the reader finds that although childhood is generally seen as a time of purity, innocence and freshness, here it is being rejected in favour of life with all its vicissitudes. This image, like the one previously cited, evidences an optimistic belief in the value of life. There is no indication of altered perceptual or even conceptual modalities. Therefore, the statement is processed, once again, by the verbal and sequential left hemisphere.

3. "La vie comme un passeport vierge" (p. 73).

Somewhat disappointingly, this image too communicates figuratively and requires only inferential decoding. Life is seen here as a blank, presumably pure, book upon which the stamps of experience are written. Since it can be decoded through analytic processes and appears to be conceptually rather than perceptually oriented, I suggest that left hemisphere activity dominates both its creation and its reception.

4. "Ainsi la rosée à tête de chatte se berçait" (p. 68).

This image cannot be decoded through either contextual or inferential readings within the established bounds of either semantic or perceptual frameworks. There are, however, two possibilities: the reader may try to read it associatively or he may try to visualize it homospatially. In the second instance, one possible visualization would be dew with a cat-shaped head swinging softly back and forth.

When read associatively, the reference to dew suggests water and, by extrapolation, transformation and continuation. The dew acquires, in addition, an almost live quality by its ties to a cat's head. A cat is clearly suggestive of stealth, of quick and silent movement, perhaps even of mystery. Also because eyes are a dominant physical feature of felines, there is an implication of luminosity, a glow within the dew. The ability to see in an unearthly way or to see when others cannot is included in the image, since felines have the ability to see when other animals do not.

There is ambiguity in the temporal sense in the line for dew can be understood to appear in between night and the break of day. The quality of trans-temporality creates a feeling of uncertainty about beginnings and endings; lines of separation appear to be disappearing. Movement is stated in the verb "se berçait"--a silent, peaceful back and forth motion suggestive of an endless metronomic and self-sustaining action, like the swing from day to night or the passage of time.

The image can, I believe, be best appreciated visually, although because of the non-normative perceptions offered, the visualizations must be of a holistic rather than sequential nature which indicates increased right hemisphere activity. Even when interpreted in the more verbally oriented associative mode, sequential logic is replaced by simultaneous association.

5. "L'éternité recherche une montre-bracelet" (p. 68).

This humorous, slightly ironical, comment on time cannot be interpreted either contextually or inferentially within our normative frameworks. The idea of eternity which is timeless looking for a device to mark the passage of hours is absurd. However, it is our analytic, left hemisphere knowledge of the concept of eternity and the function of watches which enables us to see the humour in the statement. The semantic incompatibility indicates a right hemisphere contribution to the image, but the decoding process is governed strictly by the verbal hemisphere. Even when evident semantic incompatibility indicates that an image is automatic, the effect of the imagenic communication may still be strongest in the left hemisphere.

> 6. "La belle, la victime, celle qu'on appelait/Dans le quartier la petite pyramide de réséda/Décousait pour elle seule un nuage pareil/A un sachet de pitié" (p. 67).

This image cannot be decoded either contextually or inferentially. This indicates that the communicative modality involved is associative and that normative frameworks are broken. There is a strong visual component in the imagery which optimally may induce the reader to form a mental image of a beautiful victim who is unstitching a cloud or a sachet superimposed on a small pyramid of reseda. While this visualization cannot be comprehended through analytic processes, it can be appreciated as a unique perception. Moreover, the possible relationship between the components in the image can be explored from seemingly infinite perspectives.

If approached associatively, the reader could find that the image combines elements from the plant, mineral, and human kingdoms since the words "la belle," "la victime," "pyramide," and "réseda" are linked together. A reader may also find a suggestion of the continuation of time in the words pyramid and reseda, for the pyramids have endured for centuries and reseda is a perennial plant whose bloom is a pale green flower. In addition, both the plant and the pyramid seem to be reaching upwards towards the sky, while, in fact, they must remain in or on the ground in order to maintain their existence.

The earth is combined with the sky in the latter part of the image when the girl unstitches a cloud for herself. This image is a delicate one suggesting softness and a vague hint of sadness. Clouds, in a sense, surround objects with an aura which in this case is pity.

Although, as we have seen, the image can be partially interpreted through associative processes; when approached in this fashion, the interpretations are totally individualistic. A visualization of the image, on the other hand, would be fairly standard. Since the image cannot be understood through sequential reading processes, and since it does induce strong mental images, it appears to necessitate activation of right hemisphere dominant spatial holistic processing. It is best read visually as a homospatial image.

7. "Le désespoir roulait au ciel ses grands arums si beaux" (p. 85).

This image cannot be decoded contextually or inferentially within normative frameworks, because semantic incompatibility precludes any sequential reading. Read visually the image offers a contrast between the darkness of despair (perhaps visualized as dark clouds) and the beauty of the lilies superimposed upon one another. This superimposition could lead the reader to try to ascertain some relationship between lilies and despair, thus opening his thought patterns to new ideas.

When read verbally or associatively, the reader could suggest that despair assumes greater power by being associated with the storm. This occurs because the verb used "roulait" is the same verb used for thunder when it is rolling in the sky. The joining of despair with lilies provides an odd combination of blendings and contrasts, for while lilies are often associated with peace and tranquility they are also connected with funerals and death.

Since the image cannot be read in accordance with sequential language demands, and since visual appreciation has precedence over verbal explication the image appears to depend upon right hemisphere activity.

8. "Les torpeurs se déployaient comme la buée" (p. 85).

Although there is a strong visualization offered by the image, the visualization is dependent upon successful inferential decoding. In other words, the image must be read verbally in order to be appreciated visually. From past relational semantic expectations, the reader may assume that feelings of torpor or lethargy are slowly spreading like a soft covering of mist which encompasses and surrounds objects. Since this image is pliable to inferential reading strategies, its reception--if not its creation--involves primarily left hemisphere activity.

9. "Le sable n'est qu'un horloge phosphorescent/Qui dit minuit" (p. 69).

From the evident semantic incompatibilities in the image ("sable" = "un horloge phosphorescent") the reader immediately knows that it cannot be decoded either contextually or inferentially. If read visually, a homospatial image of a phosphorescent clock set at midnight is superimposed with sand, perhaps a beach. If, on the other hand, the image is read associatively the reader may note an odd contradiction between the vastness generally associated with sand, and the mention of a phosphorescent clock. This contradiction could possibly be resolved if, through the process of association, the reader equates hourglass with both sand and clock.

Another interpretation could be that the "horloge phosphorescent" is the moon because the moon was used to measure time and it looks phosphorescent. Since sand is joined with the "moon," this reading would imply a joining of the terrestrial with the heavenly. In addition, since Phosphor is the morning star (Venus), there is an indication that the phosphorscent clock could be interpreted as Venus.

There are, no doubt, as many possible interpretations using associative readings as there are people reading the image.

The fact that the image can only be read either visually or associatively indicates a dearth of sequential, normative frameworks. The image should, therefore, increase activity in the visual, holistic, and simultaneous right hemisphere.

The next major work published by André Breton was the First Manifesto (1924) in which the creative text Poisson soluble was included.

1. Mais dans sa chair transparente se conjugent la rosée du soir et la sueur des astres (p. 68).

This strikingly beautiful image does not communicate a perception or a conception which can be understood within the boundaries of our normative frameworks. However, when decoded visually the reader forms a homospatial image where evening's dew, and the sweat of stars meet within transparent flesh.

If read verbally through associative processes, the image clearly evokes an impression of lightness and tranquility. It also involves the joining of flesh, spirit, mortality, immortality, the terrestrial and the heavenly. In the transparent flesh there is conciliation even between the real (rosée du soir) and the unreal (sueur des astres).

> 2. "La nuit est venue, pareille à un saut de carpe à la surface d'une eau violette et les étranges lauriers s'entrelacent au ciel qui descend de la mer" (p. 75).

The reader is warned by the first four words that this unusual image describes nightfall. This information helps the reader to understand the succeeding images and to place them beside if not within a normative framework. Because of the information given at the beginning of the image, it can be decoded inferentially which indicates that the communicative modality involved is the figurative. Through inferential processes, the reader could arrive at the interpretation that although nightfall usually comes slowly, in this image its appearance is sudden. The strange laurels could be drops of water which were formed with the splash of the fish returning to the water. The water's violet color could be an optical illusion created by the setting sun. The idea of optical illusions would also seem to explain the phrase "ciel qui descend de la mer," since in poor light perceptions are often altered. There is also the possibility of a reflection of the sky in the sea which would give the impression, in certain light conditions, of the sky actually descending from the sea.

The most interesting aspect of this particular image is that without the first four words which allow us to develop and then to extend our frameworks, the image would have required either visual or associative readings. In other words, only when no recognizable framework structure is available do readers react with simultaneous, visual, and holistic processes. In other instances, the verbal conceptual processes maintain their dominant position.

> 3. "La pluie de l'ombre sous l'immense chapeau de paille de la jeune fille de mes rêves, dont le ruban est une rigole de pluie" (p. 97).

This image clearly cannot be be decoded within any normative conceptual or perceptual framework. In addition, the number of different components involved make a visual homospatial reading difficult although not impossible particularly if the reader is familiar with surrealist painting. If read visually, the most notable feature of the image is its insistance on rain/water imagery with the opening being "[l]a pluie de l'ombre," and the closing being "rigole de pluie."

If the reader tries to employ the associative verbal reading process, he may note firstly that rain suggests renewal and regeneration. When, as in this image, it is connected with youth (jeune fille) the positive implications are even stronger. The statement that rain is a shadow is clearly impossible to accept within our established semantic frameworks, yet the juxtaposition of rain with shadow makes the reader suddenly aware of a shared affinity--both rain and shadow affect perception.

In essence, the conclusions produced by this associative reading while indicating right hemisphere participation, also serve to expand our left hemisphere dominant frameworks by showing us an unexpected similarity between rain and shadows.

The following examples are drawn from Breton's work Le Revolver à Cheveux blancs.[335]

> "Les pieuvres ailées guideront une dernière fois la barque dont les voiles sont faites de ce jour heure par heure" (p. 106).

While the first part of the image "Les pieuvres ailées guideront une dernière fois la barque," can be visualized quite easily without even employing homospatial techniques, the latter part of the image "dont les voiles sont faites de ce jour heure par heure," breaks normative framework expectations and the reader takes recourse to associative processes. Inferentially the wings of the octopus could well be equivalent to its tentacles, since the shape is vaguely similar and both wings and tentacles are responsible for movement. The image of winged octopuses guiding a ship is one of fantasy, similar to images which one might expect to find in children's fairy tales.

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[335] André Breton, Le Revolver à Cheveux blancs (Paris: Gallimard, 1932). All other references are to this edition.

When read associatively, the second part of the image implies that the sails which propel the boat are powered by the experience of what happens during a day. A suggestion could be made that the boat is an image of a human being and that the sails are his experiences. After this particular associative reading, a homospatial image can be constructed where a human figure is superimposed on the original visualization of a boat with sails being guided by winged octopi.

2. "Tu arriveras seule sur cette plage perdue
Où une étoile descendra sur tes bagages de sable" (p. 108).

The first line "Tu arriveras sur cette plage perdue," meets normative framework expectations. Indeed, with the exception of the adjective "lost" which modifies beach and which can inferentially be understood to mean lonely or quiet, the image can be understood contextually. However, the following line radically breaks the framework indicating that it cannot be comprehended through normative processes. If interpreted through homospatial visualization, the reader could form an image of a single person on a remote beach superimposed with a star descending upon suitcases of sand. Such a perception is reassuring in its beauty and tranquility.

When read associatively, a star descending on the luggage of sand suggests that beauty and light are finally being brought to bear on the fragmentation that the human race carries as its baggage. The implication could be that the "tu" has reached a location of rare beauty where he/she may be saved. Although a partial reading may be achieved through associative processes, this image seems more amenable to literal visual readings which indicates that right hemisphere activity plays an important role in decoding efforts.

> 3. "Les belles fenêtres ouvertes et fermées/Suspendues aux lèvres du jour" (p. 126).

This image is quite easy to envision homospatially, resulting in the formation of a mental picture composed of open and shut windows suspended from lips which have scenes from daytime hours within their contours.

When read associatively the beautiful open and shut windows could indicate the idea of beauty existing in opposites. The fact that the windows are hanging on the lips of day--as if reluctant to let go--suggests that they greatly value the daylight hours which allow them to "see" the world. The mention of lips brings a dimension of softness or tenderness to the imagery, a dimension which contrasts with the hardness of the windows. However, this is a contradiction which can be reconciled, at least partially, with the idea of an intimate relationship between windows and day, for it almost seems as if they are kissing good-bye at dusk.

The next selection of images comes from Breton's work

L'Air de l'eau.[336]

1. " Monde dans un baiser, un grain de sable" (p. 157).

This image is a notably simple, straightforward one to find in a surrealist collection, but I have included it here because it states very succinctly the great faith which the surrealists had in the power of love. If, as we might justifiably assume, the image is automatic, it evidences the existence of a certain fundamental ideal which apparently exists in both the visual (right) and the verbal (left) hemispheres--specifically the importance of love. However, I should like to point out that the image actually appeals to the left hemisphere, partially I believe, because of the importance love has had in poetry. The "world in a kiss" fits nicely into an overly-glamorized conceptual framework containing ideas relating to love.

2. Je chante votre horizon fatal
Vous qui clignez imperceptiblement dans la main de mon amour
Entre le rideau de vie
Et le rideau du coeur (pp. 170-71).

This imagery cannot be interpreted within normative framework boundaries. Because the semantic elements are not especially conducive to the formation of mental imagery, the reader may find himself taking recourse first to free association and later try to form a mental visualization.

When read associatively, the reader notes a contradiction between the implied threat of the first line and the indication of protection being offered by the hand because of the mention of love. The blinking movement (opening and closing) of the eyes reinforces the idea of a double nature which is further strengthened by the mention of the two different curtains. The reader could, in addition, note a possible relationship between the first line which could be understood to imply approaching death ("horizon fatal") and the third line "rideau de vie," which, because curtains can be opened and closed with ease may suggest a reprieve from death. The image "main de mon amour" found in the second line appears connected with the image "rideau de coeur" in the fourth line since love and heart are so frequently equated.

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[336] André Breton, *L'Air de l'eau* (1934; rpt. Paris: Gallimard, 1966). All other references are to this edition.

After engaging in an associative interpretation process, the reader might then try to combine visually the elements that he has associatively defined. Although associative reading strategies do help to break down normative frameworks, they are still partially dependent upon the left brain for semantic storage and retrieval. Therefore, I would suggest that the image is heavily dependent upon the dominant hemisphere.

I should now like to draw the reader's attention towards a selection of images drawn from Breton's famous poem "L'Union libre" published in 1931.[337] The opening imagery of the poem "Ma femme à la chevelure de feu de bois/Aux pensées d'éclairs de chaleur/A la taille de sablier" cannot be decoded contextually or inferentially within our normative frameworks. If approached visually, the reader may form a mental picture of a woman's hair superimposed with a wood fire. If approached through the verbal associative decoding processes the reader may interpret the image to mean that the woman's hair is warm, bright, red, etc. Interesting, in this case is the fact that the visual and the verbal images coincide to produce basically the same interpretation. The suggestion of warmth is carried over to the "Aux pensées d'éclairs de chaleur." But now a certain sharpness and suddenness is added, perhaps indicating a quick thinking, incisive person. This image is difficult to visualize and the reader must try verbally to forge some link of meaning between the components "pensées," "éclairs," and "chaleur," as well as with the wood fire in the previous line. The next line which describes the woman with the waist of an hourglass communicates within the boundaries of our framework expectations and it can be decoded figuratively without much effort. The comparison of a woman's figure with an hourglass has become so common that waist is immediately associated with the center portion of an hourglass. In addition, there is a definite physical similarity between the general shape of an hourglass and the shape of a certain percentage of the female population.

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[337] André Breton, Claire de terre (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), pp. 93-95. All other references are to this edition.

The subsequent line "Ma femme à la taille de loutre entre les dents du tigre," breaks the reader's framework expectations with a vengeance.

The description of the woman's mouth is a highly visual one reading "Ma femme à la bouche de cocarde et de bouquet d'étoiles de dernière grandeur." While the comparison of a mouth to a rosette is readily, indeed facilely, comprehensible, its juxtaposition with "bouquet d'toiles de dernière grandeur" expels it from its position within normative or even extended frameworks. If he chooses to employ visual decoding strategies, the reader may develop a homospatial image with brilliant stars superimposed on rosettes which are, in turn, superimposed on a mouth. Should the reader opt for a verbal associative decoding, he may eventually reconcile the semantic contradictions by associating mouth, rosette, and a bouquet of stars with love and romance. At this point, one must note that the woman in the poem is beginning to assume awesome proportions. She is virtually being deified.

There is a strong contrast between the celestial magnitude of this image and the terrestrial mundanity of the following one, "Aux dents d'empreintes de souris blanches sur la terre blanche." Once more, the imagery breaks the reader's established frameworks. Read visually, the tracks of white mice on a white background do have an amazing similarity to teeth. If decoded associatively, the semantic incompabilities could be reconciled with the shared attributes of small and white. Again, visual and verbal interpretations evidence great similarity.

A few lines further on in the poem, the reader may be brought to an abrupt halt by the apparently sacriligious image "Ma femme à la langue d'hostie poignardée." Associatively, the reader could arrive at the idea of death, an idea which would be reinforced by two succeeding images: "la langue de poupée qui ouvre et ferme les yeux," and "la langue de pierre incroyable."

As often happens in surrealist poetry--largely because perceptions keep changing--after the appearance of images of death and destruction the tone changes abruptly. The images which follow reflect more positive visualizations as we see with the description of the woman's eyelashes and eyebrows: "Ma femme aux cils de bâtons d'écriture d'enfant/Au sourcils de bord de nid d'hirondelle."

Throughout the poem, the reader finds many images that evidence synathaesia which cannot be understood within our frameworks (e.g., "Ma femme aux épaules de champagne/Et de fontaine à têtes de dauphins sous la glace," "Ma femme aux aisselles de martre et de fênes," "Ma femme aux seins de creuset du rubis," etc.).

In short, the entire poem reads like a marvelous obsession. It offers a constantly changing series of perceptions which enable the reader to develop a greater sensitivity to the possibility of inter-relationships between the objects in the world around him. Even those images which appear to be governed by auditory considerations (e.g., "Au seins de spectre de la rose sous la rosée," "Ma femme aux mollets de moelle de sureau") offer new perceptions which may help to expand the reader's perceptual and conceptual processing modes.

In the preceeding discussion, I chose to examine images selected at random in order to minimize the chances of unintentionally selecting imagery which would conform to preconceived ideas. As we have completed this section of the study, I wish now briefly to focus the reader's attention on a longer excerpt of surrealist writing. The imagery I have chosen for examination comes from the section "Les Possessions," in L'Immaculée Conception, a long prose poem co-authored by André Breton and Paul Eluard.[338] In "Les Possessions" the poets--who believe that the normal mind poetically conditioned is capable of producing images identical to those resulting from "madness"--seek to simulate a variety of mental illnesses ranging from Mental Debility to Schizophrenia.

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[338] André Breton and Paul Eluard, L'Immaculée Conception (1930; rpt. Paris: Seghers, 1975). All quotations come from this edition.

> Quand c'en fut fait de cet amour, je me trouvai comme l'oiseau sur la branche. Je ne servais plus à rien. J'observai toutefois que les taches de pétrole dans l'eau me renvoyaient mon image et je m'aperçus que le Pont-au-Change près duquel se tient le marché aux oiseaux, se courbait de plus en plus.
>
> C'est ainsi qu'un beau jour je suis passé pour toujours de l'autre côté de l'arc-en-ciel à force de regarder les oiseaux changeants. Maintenant je n'ai plus rien à faire sur la terre. Non plus que les autres oiseaux je dis que je n'ai plus à me commettre sur la terre, à faire l'acte de presence ailée sur la terre. Je refuse de répéter avec vous: "Nous mourons pour les p'ti-i-its oiseaux, régalez vos p'ti-i-its oiseaux."
>
> Le bariolage de l'averse parle perroquet. Il couve le vent qui éclôt avec des graines dans les yeux. La double paupière du soleil se lève et s'abaisse sur la vie. Les pattes des oiseaux sur le carreau du ciel sont ce que j'appelais naguère les étoiles. La terre elle-même dont on s'explique si mal la démarche tant qu'on demeure sous la voute, la terre palmée de ses déserts est soumise aux lois de la migration (pp. 43-44).

The majority of this simulation is oriented towards imagery involving birds. Taken in the larger context of the collected group of simulations, this text maintains, albeit rather indirectly, the major themes of love, religion, power, and transcendence found in the other sections. One possible interpretation of the text is that the various types of birds embody the different types of madness being simulated by the poets. For example, the lack of higher level synthesis evident when a parrot mimics speech is reminiscent of the inability of those suffering from Mental Debility to grasp and to communicate abstract concepts.

For the purposes of this study, one of the most interesting aspects of the simulation is the emphasis on emotional trauma which may influence an individual's perception both of himself and of the world around him.

Indeed, in the first line of the text--which communicates in the figurative modality and which can, therefore, be decoded inferentially--the reader is informed of a loss of love. The next statement communicates quite literally and promotes contextual reading strategies. It indicates the feeling of worthlessness which often follows emotional upheaval. The beginning of the change in perceptual modalities is found in the image of the persona gazing at visual images reflected in oil stains. As he observes his image he notes that the "Pont-au-Change, près duquel se tient le marché aux oiseaux, se courbait de plus en plus." This imagenic statement communicates literally and can be decoded contextually offering a clear visual image of a figure in close proximity to birds and a bridge, as well as a concise conceptual statement of loneliness.

In the second section the reader immediately notices that many images begin rationally only to terminate with a word or phrase which does not manifest any normative cause--effect relationship that can be satisfactorily decoded through left hemisphere processes. This is a characteristic common to much surreal imagery, particularily that created through co-authored automatic writing. For example, the first line of this section begins with "C'est ainsi qu'un beau jour," and ends with "je suis passé pour toujours de l'autre côté de l'arc-en-ciel à force de regarder les oiseaux changeants." Since the reader has already been advised of potential alterations in perceptual modes, he may conclude--through inferential decoding based on a similarity in shape--that the bent bridge and the rainbow are different perceptions of the same visual image. Additional support for this interpretation lies in the fact that an image reflected in oil often has colorations which are quite different from the original object. Therefore, the reflection of a bridge in a medium which so distorts perception could well be referred to as a rainbow. Another similarity in the imagery of the first and second sections is the importance of birds which appear to act as catalysts in the perceptual alterations. Finally, in the second section as in the first, the reader encounters a literal statement involving a feeling of nothingness or uselessness with the words, "Maintenant je n'ai plus rien à faire sur la terre."

The most definitive change in perception is found in the following words "Non plus que les autres oiseaux je dis que je n'ai plus à me commetre sur la terre, à faire acte de présence ailée sur la terre," where the persona now sees himself as a bird. The sentence is basically a statement of fact. While the information is contrary to the knowledge and reasoning processes of the left hemisphere, I would suggest that an alternate reading strategy is simply to accept the comment as being quite valid and accordance with the persona's different perceptual mode. Since theoretically the perception is no longer controlled or modified by left hemisphere processes, one could assume that the language which is used to express the perception will reflect the alteration. Therefore, language will no longer communicate within the frameworks established by the dominant verbal hemisphere. Consequently, the reader cannot interpret the imagery by employing either the contextual or the inferential strategies governed by the left hemisphere. Moreoever, if, as we assume, this altered perception is a result of decreased left hemisphere activity, the communication of the persona is necessarily concrete because of the inability of the right hemisphere to process abstractions. Even if--as is more likely--the persona's message is not a result of decreased left hemisphere activity, the effect on the reader remains unchanged. When the communication is not in accord with established frameworks, the reader must construct new ones which may be contrary to his analytic experience. Since visual imagery proceeded verbal imagery just as sight proceeded organized speech, the reader's first task is to develop new visual frameworks.

The next section cannot be satisfactorily decoded using established inferential reading strategies as the combination of words found in the statements and images seldom have a relationship which can be ascertained through analytic or sequential processes. If the reader chooses to employ free association to reconcile the seemingly antagonistic semantics and thus to interpret the imagery, a virtually infinite number of interpretations is possible depending upon the individual reader's background. For example, the first image "Le bariolage de l'averse parle perroquet," could possibly be interpreted as meaning that the sound of the rain is the same as noise that a parrot makes. Alternatively, the reader could try to form a visual mental image composed of the different elements. A superimpostion of the components could result in a picture of musical notes (bariolage), a rainshower (averse), and a parrot with its beak open (parle perroquet).

The use of superimposition, juxtaposition or free association may allow the reader to perceive previously concealed relationships among the different elements in the imagery. The reader's personal discovery of these new relationships is, I believe the goal and perhaps the achievement of surreal imagery.

IX. Federico García Lorca and Surrealism in Spain

The issue of Surrealism is Spanish literature has long been a highly contentious one which involves both historical and cultural considerations. The central question is whether or not Surrealism even existed in the literature. As corollaries to this come such questions as is Spanish Surrealism is a distinct type of Surrealism, or is it an imitation of the Parisian model? Critical opinion is greatly divided on the matter, ranging from Guillermo de Torre who said, when referring to Surrealism that, "cuya existencia en las letras españolas es más que dudosa."[339] to that of Paul Ilie who argued for recognition of Spanish Surrealism in his book The Spanish Mode in Surrealist Literature and who found surreal imagery in the works many well-known poets, including Juan Larrea, Rafael Alberti, Luis Cernuda, Vincente Aleixandre, and, of course, Federico García Lorca. Ilie notes that the major problem involved when dealing with surrealist imagery is the fact that since the movement started in France, was initially defined that country, and since the majority of the writers actually associated with the movement were members of the Paris school, critics tend not to define the characteristics of surreal imagery, but rather to list as surrealists only those writers whom Breton designated as surrealists. He wishes to "employ the word surrealism in the least doctrinaire and most generous way possible,"[340] for while Surrealism did not exist in Hispanic writing as a school, it did exist as an influence on the development of certain Spanish writers. Jorge Guillen summarized the situation most succinctly when he wrote that "Surrealism never crystallized as a movement and served rather as an invitation to freedom of the imagination."[341] Surrealism's greatest contribution to the strongly traditional Spanish literature could well be this invitation of which he speaks.

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[339] Guillermo de Torre, quoted by Paul Ilie in The Surrealist Mode in Spanish Literature (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1968), p. 207.

A convincing argument for reducing the limits of Surrealism was presented by C.B. Morris who, arguing strongly against Ilie, writes that his [Ilie's] ideas on Surrealism "led him to write a work that, fascinating as it is, has nothing to do with French Surrealism and Spain."[342] Continuing his rebutal, Morris adds that Ilie is "Guided by his personal radar system to the strange, disturbing world that is for him the most infallible criterion for determining whether a work is surrealistic," and that "Ilie has thus borrowed a word legitimized by a specific artistic movement to label a vogue that he does not define and that in his view has nothing to do with that movement."[343] Morris concludes his argument, in a somewhat hostile fashion by stating that, "the term Spanish Surrealism is as critically incongruous as *French* conceptismo or *Welsh* gongorismo."[344]

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[340] Ilie, The Surrealist Mode, p. 4.

[341] Jorge Guillen, Language and Poetry (Massachusetts: Colonial Press, 1961), p. 208.

[342] C.B. Morris, Surrealism and Spain (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1972), p. 7.

[343] Morris, Surrealism, p. 7.

After perusing arguments both for and against the existence of surrealist poetry in Spain, the reader is left with the impression that there are at least two totally distinct types of Surrealism.

While in France Surrealism centered around a relatively small group, in Spain Surrealism was confined to a few articles and scattered translations of French surrealists poets published in Catalan and Castillian periodicals.[345] There were not "self proclaimed exponents of Surrealism, either as a 'school,' as imitators of the French, or as independent writers."[346] Indeed, many were openly hostile to having their work classified as Surrealism,[347] since during the 1920s surrealist writing had become synonymous with automatic writing. However, as Derek Harris observes, "automatic writing is merely a technique for suppressing controlling mechanisms,"[348] and it is not the only contributing element to the surrealist vision. In the case of the Spanish poets who created surrealist imagery, Harris believes that, "the rational, aesthetic and moral barriers were brushed aside by violent emotions seeking urgent expression, with the result that they rarely, if ever, need to employ the contrived technique of automatism to free their expression from conscious control."[349] In Harris' opinion, "[t]he defining principle of surrealism is to attempt to give free expression to the subconscious by whatever means."[350]

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[344] Morris, *Surrealism*, p. 7.

[345] The most important of these literary magazines were *L'Amic de les Arts*, *Hèlix*, *Litoral*, and *La Gaceta Literaria*.

[346] Ilie, *The Surrealist Mode*, p. 1.

[347] Pablo Corbalá, *Poesia surrealista en España* (Madrid: Ediciones del Centro, 1974), p. 24.

[348] Derek Harris, *Poeta en Nueva York* (London: Grant and Cutler Ltd., 1978), p. 11.

This is not to suggest, however, that surrealist experiments were being ignored in Spain. Rather, the Spanish poets were experimenting quietly and in private.[351] Indeed, three years before Louis Aragon delivered his celectrated lecture at the Residencia de Estudiantes in Madrid in 1925 André Breton spoke at the Ateneo in Barcelona.[352]

The issue of Surrealism in Spain is further confused by the fact that it entered Spain via Catalonia, largely under the erratic guidance of Salvador Dalí who alternated between working closely with members of the Paris group and declaring that he wanted nothing whatsoever to do with them. Yet Dalí's contributions to surrealist imagery in Spanish poetry are undeniable, particularly with regard to the importance of perception to this imagery. Indeed "for Dalí, reality was less a structure than a mode of perception...."[353] This concept of reality being determined by perception was transfered to other poets, one of the most interesting of these being Salvador Dalí's close friend Federico García Lorca. Harris elaborates on the importance of altered perceptual modalities in Spanish surrealist imagery:

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[349] Harris, Poeta en Nueva York, pp. 11-12.

[350] Harris, Poeta en Nueva York, p. 11.

[351] Angel del Río in the Introduction to Poet in New York, bilingual edition, trans. by B. Belitt (New York: Grove Press, 1955), p. XXXIV.

[352] Corbalán, Poesía, p. 23.

> Now the Spanish poets, in a state of emotional disturbance, were unable to express themselves with clarity, yet at the same time they had a great need to convey the intensity of their feelings. The combination of hallucinatory experience with the expressive technique of the objective correlative may be regarded as what produces poetry of a surrealist nature in Spain. A heightened and distorted perception enables the Spanish poets to use private symbols and imagery created by processes of free association in a way that has the lack of inhibition of French surrealism but which retains a measure of control derived from the emotional condition they seek to express.[354]

Federico García Lorca is a most interesting writer, not only because of the wide range of his literary talent, which gave the world such masterpeices as Romanceros gitanos and Poeta en Nueva York, but also because he often stands in the center of the critical debate raging around the issue of Surrealism in Spanish literature as we see in Angel del Río's comment that "En cierto sentido, se podría decir que Lorca era más surrealista que los surrealistas."[355] The imagery I have chosen to examine comes from Poeta en Nueva York. The poems which comprise the text were composed primarily in the year 1929 and chronical Lorca's vist to and experiences in the United States.

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[353] Ilie, The Surrealist Mode, p. 17.

[354] Harris, Poeta en Nueva York, p. 12.

[355] Angel del Río, Poeta en Nueva York (Madrid: Taurus Ediciones, 1958), p. 45.

Virtually every authoritative book written on Lorca cites a personal crisis as the reason for which he went to New York, and the difficulty he had adjusting to the North American life style is equally well known. Many critics have noted his emotionally disturbed state and one commented that it was this state of hypersensitivity that resulted in his heightened perception.[356] Another critic has even stated that, "Lorca saw the city [New York] in a state of genuine hallucination."[357] The reference to the idea of hallucination is interesting in that it calls to mind the famous surrealist experiments with trances and hallucinations. It also suggests the possibility that Lorca was so distressed that his mental condition almost qualified as an illness. Since, as we known, in certain mental illnesses perceptual modalities do not function according to normative expectations and therefore indicate a disruption of some type in analytic thinking processes (left hemisphere), the suggestion could be offered that Lorca's poetry during this period evidences decreased left hemisphere activity.

In order to explore this hypothesis further, an in-depth examination of Lorca's imagery is necessary. The first text of *Poeta en Nueva York*, "Vuelta de paseo" is representative of his poetry and an examination of the images found in this work will give us a greater understanding of Lorca's poetic artistry during this period.

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[356] Virginia Higginbotham, "Reflejos de Lautréamont en Poeta en Nueva York," Hispanófila, 46 (September 1972), pp. 59-60.

[357] Carlos Edmundo de Orry, Lorca (Paris: Editions Universaires, 1967), p. 116.

Vuelta de paseo

Asesinado por el cielo
entre las formas que van hacia la sierpe
y las formas que buscan el cristal,

dejaré crecer mis cabellos
Con el árbol de muñones que no canta
y el niño con el blanco rostro de huevo.

Con los animalitos de cabeza rota
y el agua harapienta de los pies secos.

Con todo lo que tiene cansancio sordomudo
y mariposa ahogada en el tintero.

Tropezando con mi rostro distinto de cada día
Asesinado por el cielo![358]

One of the more interesting aspects of this poem is the way in which various critics interpret it, and through these interpretations one fact becomes clear--specifically that the influence of Surrealism has often had more effect upon the critics than upon the poet. To further clarify this point let us look at the way in which three different literary scholars have approached the imagery in the work.

Juan Larrea believes that the *sierpe* refers to flesh and that *cristal* refers to art. Extrapolating from this idea he suggests that "the poet brought this crisis to New York with him, and that the strange environment served to exacerbate it."[359] Derek Harris, who draws his conclusions from the repeated use of certain images in other poems, states that both *sierpe* and *cristal* are death images, but that the former, in García Lorca's usage, is also linked with the Christian symbol of death. He therefore concludes the image implies that, "the poet is faced with a choice of two evils,"[360] and suggests that *sierpe* and *cristal* are "alternative formulations of the old and new forces of death."[361] Harris reads the final image of the stanza as a metaphor for death.[362] Angel del Río, when commenting on the third stanza, writes, "Aquí el poeta, en su soledad, perdido en un mundo extraño, 'entre formas que van hacia la sierpe' (es decir, que obedecen ciegamente a impulsos terrenales) y las que 'buscan el cristal' (buscan la luz), se ve asesinado por el cielo', como víctima propiciatoria del caos de la vida y del mundo."[363]

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[358] Federico García Lorca, *Poeta en Nueva York*, bilingual edition, trans. B. Belitt (New York: Grove Press, 1955), p. 2.

These three different critics provide three radically different readings. Two of the central words *sierpe* and *cristal* attain in their minds symbolic values which tell us more about the critics than about the poem. *Sierpe* becomes flesh, death, and worldly drives; *cristal* becomes art, death, and light. Each of the three interpretations is valid, despite the fact that the individual critics interpret the key words according to their own subjective, personal beliefs, and their individual backgrounds. The symbolic value which each of them attaches to key words can be justified through sequential reasoning processes, and the images can be satisfactorily explicated.

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[359] Juan Larrea, "Asesinado por el cielo," *Letras de Mexico* III (1941-1942), pp. 1, 5-6.

[360] Harris, *Poeta en Nueva York*, p. 25.

[361] Harris, *Poeta en Nueva York*, p. 25.

[362] Harris, *Poeta en Nueva York*, p. 27.

[363] Angel del Río, *Poeta en Nueva York* (Madrid: Taurus Ediciones, 1958), p. 21.

Occasionally, however, the symbolic approach to reading Lorca is carried to an extreme as, for example, in Betty Jean Craige's study of *Poeta en Nueva York*, which Predmore discusses:

> In her recent study . . . Craige finds an overall meaning in the book. She expresses it in a variety of ways that can at least be suggested by two or three quotations. The subtitle of her book is "The Fall into Consciousness" so that *Poeta en Nueva York* can be seen as a modern re-enactment of the Biblical Fall: "The myth of the Fall expresses both the state of man's alienation from God and nature, resulting from consciousness, and the state of modern civilization's alienation from any spiritually unifying reality which might have held society together as a community" (p. 2). But it is a recovery as well as a fall: "Thus *Poeta en Nueva York* is the symbolization of Lorca's experience of depression and isolation in a foreign reality he apprehends as a hostile chaos. It is therefore the account of a psychic journey from alienation and disorientation toward reintegration into the natural world (p. 2). And the reintegration is furthered by sacrifice: Thus *Poeta en Nueva York* may be viewed as a soul's symbolic journey from Adam to Christ, with Adam becoming Christ through sacrafice (p. 85).[364]

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[364] Richard L. Predmore, *Lorca's New York Poetry* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1980), p. 48.

By switching the focus of the examination from specific imagery to general structures without analyzing either, and by introducing the concept of Christianity, Craige neatly avoids explicating the text. In essence, she is taking an established mythology (Christianity) and creating a mythology (Lorca's experiences in New York) which she can structurally compare, but which does not illuminate the poetry. Christian mythology surfaces frequently in discussions of Poet in New York, but it is seldom employed consistently. When the occasional critic does apply elements of Christianity to individual images, the results are seldom edifying. For example, the last two lines of the poem "Tropezando con mi rostro distinto de cada día/ Asesinado por el cielo!" evoked the comment that "Here is an expression of disorientation, narcissism and alienation, as the contemplated face changes daily with an ironic echo of the Lord's Prayer."

If the imagery in the poem is approached from the perspective of left brain--right brain perception, the question of hermetic symbolism becomes a lesser consideration and we no longer need to psychoanalize the poet in order to read the poetry. Instead of trying to discover and identify symbols in Lorca's text, I shall approach his poetic communication from a perceptual perspective, suggesting that Lorca was concerned with expressing a particular concrete visualization rather than an abstract idea.

The fact that the poem was placed under the major heading "Solitude" is significant since prolonged or intense solitude is sometimes a factor in the onset of various mental disorders which may affect the individual's perception of himself and the world around him. The sense of alienation which Lorca felt in the United States must have been extreme, for the normally gregarious writer was unable to communicate in English with the exception of a few words which he pronounced phonetically.

The first stanza "Asesinado por el cielo/entre las formas que van hacia la sierpe/y las formas que buscan el cristal/dejaré crecer mis cabellos," offers a variety of images.

The language modality in the first three lines of the first stanza is figurative and the imagery must be decoded inferentially. The image type in the initial line is that of fantasy, since being killed by the sky is contrary to physical laws as we know them. Decoding the image through inferential processes yields the ideas of an oppressively hot day and depression. Visually, the reader may see the sun relentlessly beating down on the poet. The image of the second and third lines can, as we have seen in the studies of other critics, be read symbolically. However, a plausible reading may also be attained without taking recourse to symbolic interpretations. The language modality being used is figurative and consequently the interpretation necessitates activation of inferential processes. Or does it? Inferential processes, as we know, are governed by the left hemisphere, but perceptual processes partake of activity in both hemispheres. Let us pause for a moment and consider that neither "las formas," nor "la sierpe" need necessarily be symbols for some abstract concept--life, death, or art. If the reader attempts to visualize the image, if he attempts to perceive it, before he abstracts from it, then the references to sierpe and cristal could well be a result of Lorca's visual impressions of long, narrow streets and windows in sky-scrapers.

In other words, we witness a unique phenomenon where language which seemingly operates figuratively and which demands an inferential decoding, is actually operating literally and can be read contextually if the reader is willing to relinquish a highly ingrained expectation that poetic language refers to abstractions. The language in the last line of the first stanza does, I believe, operate literally and can be best understood as a simple statement of intent. While the decision to let his hair grow may indicate apathy, or a passive form of rebellion, or even the desire for primitive look to fit in with the primitive world of sophisticated New York, I find no reason to delve for hidden meaning in a relatively commonplace statement. .

The next stanza "Con el árbol de muñones que no canta/y el niño con el blanco rostro de huevo," offers two perceptions which Lorca has of the city. I suggest that here as in the lines "entre las formas que van hacia la sierpe/y las formas que buscan el cristal," that while the language appears to be operating figuratively and needs inferential decoding, the image can be comprehended as visual perceptions which require only contextual readings. While the tree image may be interpreted as referring to emptiness or lifelessness, it can--on a perfectly literal level--be seen as a dead tree stump from which all the birds have fled. The image of "el niño con el blanco rostro de huevo" could be inferentially decoded as refering to inviduals crowded so tightly together in the street that they lose all semblance of individuality and become as blank or non-descript as an egg. Conversely, and more simply, the image could simply present Lorca's perception of a very pale, even delicate-looking child.

The third stanza in Lorca's poem offers the image of "los animalitos de cabeza rota" which can also be comprehended as the expression of an altered perceptual modality. The image could well refer to animals run over in the streets or to the remnants of children's toys in which the poet perceives a likeness to small animals. The subsequent image of "el agua harapienta de los pies secos," could be the way the poet perceived the wave-like movement of the crowds, their feet in constant motion.

The line "Con todo lo que tiene cansancio sordomudo" could also be a description of the crowds as Lorca perceives them to be, simply tired deaf-mutes. Perhaps this is also an indication of his self perception. The next image "y mariposa ahogada en el tintero" could quite plausibly be the result of the poet's having seen a butterfly in a small pool of oil which has spilled from a car.

Certainly, in the final two lines Lorca expresses his own perception of himself in the city. He has become unsure of his own identity which changes daily in his new environment as he sees himself murdered by the heavens.

As we have noticed in the above analysis, Lorca's imagery in this poem can be explicated without reference to long and involved psychological discussions, wherein words become increasingly abstract symbols distancing themselves even further from any concrete communication of a non-normative, but quite possibly valid perception. The question which must now be answered is whether or not these images are surreal.

Lorca's imagery in his poem "Vuelta de paseo" does not belong to Surrealism, for it has a structure which we follow sequentially within the limits of left-brain logic. However, we can follow the structure largely because Lorca writes within a recognizable framework. In other words, had the reader not known about Lorca's experiences, had he not known that the images described the poet's perceptions of New York, and had the poem not been entitled "Vuelta de paseo," the reader could well have had as much difficulty interpreting the imagery in the text as in any poem produced by the French surrealists. In the sense that the images in the poem offer an altered visual perception of reality, a perception which startles the reader and forces him to search for new relationships between both the visual and the verbal components comprising the imagery, his text is surreal.

The importance of accepting the crucial role of visualization in the comprehension of imagery which results from altered perceptual modalities is well exemplified in certain criticism pertaining to one of the most famous poems in the collection _Poeta en Nueva York_, "Niña ahogada en el pozo."

Niña ahogada en el pozo

(Granada y Newburg)

Las estatuas sufren por los ojos con la oscuridad de
los ataúdes,
pero sufren mucho más por el agua que no desemboca.
Que no desemboca.

El pueblo corría por las almenas rompiendo las cañas
de los pescadores.
Pronto! Los bordes! De prisa! Y croaban las
estrellas tiernas.
...que no desemboca.

Tranquila en mi recuerdo, astro, círculo, meta,
lloras por las orillas de un ojo de caballo.
...que no desemboca.

Pero nadie en lo oscuro podrá darte distancias,
sin afilado límite, porvenir de diamante.
...que no desemboca.

Mientras la gente busca silencios de almohada
tú lates para siempre definida en tu anillo.
...que no desemboca.

Eterna en los finales de unas ondas que aceptan
combate de raíces y soledad prevista.
...que no desemboca.

Ya vienen por las rampas! Levántate del agua!
Cada punto de luz te dará una cadena!
...que no desemboca.

Pero el pozo te alarga manecitas de musgo,
insospechada ondina de su casta ignorancia.
...que no desemboca.

No, que no desemboca. Agua fija en un punto,
respirando con todos sus violines sin cuerdas
en la escala de la heridas y los edificios
deshabitados.
Agua que no desemboca![365]

This particular text has attracted considerable critical attention, not to mention some admirably creative explications.[366] There is an unfortunate tendency on the part of critics who employ either Freudian or Jungian theories to explicate literature to reduce and even to mistinterpret imagery because of an insistance that everything is related to ego-consciousness and unconsciousness. These critics seem to base their decision on who is surreal and who is not on the supposed appearance of released repression (usually sexual) and archetypes in the imagery, because these phenomena are presumed to be textual evidence of the unconscious voice, which the French surrealists were trying to liberate. There is little if any room in strict Freudian psychological theories for the ideas of changing perceptions or creativity. Interpretations of imagery are stagnant, because the unconscious or right hemisphere is seen to be a repository for a fossilized past. This stagnation is diametrically opposed both to surrealist theory and pratice--where there must be constant movement--and to modern neuropsychological theory where the "unconscious" actively participates in creative perceptions. Another problem with this school of analysis is that the critic often analyzes the poet and not the imagery.

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[365] Lorca, *Obras*, pp. 504-05.

[366] See,for example, Rupert C. Allen, *The Symbolic World of Federico Garcia Lorca* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972), pp. 45-60.

R.C. Allen examines the poem from a psychoanalytic perspective and decides that it was a "notable example of Lorca's preoccupation with the creative process itself as a subject matter of poetry."[347] He goes on to discuss Lorca's emotional situation in New York:

> He suffered a severe disorientation that represented to him the worst kind of spiritual damage possible: the apparent amputation of his creative powers in what he must have come to think of as their normal form. They were replaced by a chaotic eruption of unconscious material indicative of inner destruction.[348]

He further argues that "the flow of imagery throughout Poet in New York is marked by a similarity to automatic writing accompanied by a sense of doom or apocalypse, and the lurking fear that the habitual psychic organization has been permanently destroyed."[349] How Allen arrives at these conclusions is never shown. He basis his interpretation on psychological clichés, rather than on an examination of the images. Drawing upon the ideas of Freud and Jung, he asserts that the girl who has been drowned "is an element of the speaker's own psyche,"[370] and following this line of argument writes:

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[347] Allen, The Symbolic World, p. 47.

[348] Allen, The Symbolic World, p. 47.

[349] Allen, The Symbolic World, p. 47.

> Everything points to her as a symbol for the creativity which proceeds out of contact with the feminine unconscious, and which frequently appears in the form of a helpful girl or woman. We are speaking here, of course, of what is known in analytical psychology as the anima, the feminine half of the man's psyche, that half which the male child is taught to repress in the process of developing a monosexual personality . . . For Lorca, loss of the creative flow appears in the present poem as the drowning (repressing) of a girl-image in the depths of his psyche . . . Now, for Lorca, the "psychic child," having been born into consciousness, could symbolize the beginning of a spiritual trajectory, a spiritual value growing and waxing, suffused with energy--and so could metamorphose into the well known symbol of libido: the horse.[371]

Allen's conclusion is quite simply that in the poem Lorca is "trying to describe the worst fate of all--psychic impasse, loss of contact with the creative unconscious."[372] He equates the images with Surrealism, but he apparently bases his decision primarily on the fact that they can be interpreted using Freudian and Jungian archetypes, precepts and symbols, as, in fact, virtually all imagery can be. In other words, he fallaciously equates poetic expression of altered perception with a pathological mentality. From Allen's discussion of the poem, it would seem that imagery which is subject to a Freudian reading is surreal imagery.

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[370] Allen, The Symbolic World, p. 47.

[371] Allen, The Symbolic World, p. 47.

[372] Allen, The Symbolic World, p. 51.

In the preceeding discussion we have observed the extent to which Freudian interpretations can be taken when used to explicate difficult imagery. The hazards inherent in such a conceptual approach are best illuminated by glancing at Angel del Río's factual account of the genesis of the imagery in "Niña ahogada en el pozo," which Lorca explained to him in some depth when he visited del Río in the Catskills:

> . . . estoy bien enterado de los elementos que el poeta tomó como punto de partida. Cerca de la granja, donde todo parecía abandonado, había varios grandes fosos que fueron un día canteras. El lugar, con su tierra sanguinolenta y sus rocas esqueléticas, tenía una grandeza desoladora. Como solía decir Federico, era como un paisaje lunar. No se podía oír su estrépito en el fondo . . . La inspiración para el poema no nació de la anécdota inexacta de la niña muerta, sino precisamente del contraste entre la espontánea alegría de los hijos del granjero y la tristeza del ambiente. Los distintos elementos que entran en la imágenes del poema corresponden a cosas concretas: el ataúd (sugerido por la enfermedad del dueño), "las orillas de un ojo de caballo," "el croar" (como las ranas en la noche), "de las estrellas tiernas" y, sobre todo, el "combate de raíces y soledad prevista" y "el agua que no desemboca" (la del fondo de la sima), dan a todo el poema, su sentido de fascinante irrealidad y reflejan la impressión que el lugar produjo a Lorca,[373]

The poem reflects reality as Lorca perceived it in a state of heightened sensitivity. His transformation of prosaic into poetic reality is born within this special concrete perception and is not related to the abstract conceptions of libido and anima.

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[373] del Río, Poeta en Nueva York, pp. 43-44.

Our examination of Lorca's imagery has led to the discovery of one crucially important point--specifically that images which reflect altered perceptual modalities are not granted critical recognition in their own right. Rather than accepting that this type of imagery transfers messages of certain perceptions which simply cannot be accomodated by normative perceptual frameworks, the perceptions or visualizations are ignored while critics manipulate the words to fit into extended conceptual frameworks. The end result is, I believe, that many surreal images are over-read. Today our perceptions are ordered by our conceptions, whereas originally our conceptions were based on our perceptions. Occasionally when poets such as Lorca offer us different perceptions of reality, we still insist on re-ordering them to conform to our expectations. Criticism is treating the surreal image in precisely the analytic, sequential and conceptual manner which Breton originally took exception to when he urged poets to make surrealist use of language.

X. Surrealism in Catalonia: J.V. Foix and the Surreal Image

The development of Catalan literature has been unique. Throughout history it has suffered from extremely severe censorship due to political and social repression with the result that its evolution is significantly different from that of its neighbours Spain and France.

For the first time in modern literary history, with the introduction of the Avant-garde movements into Catalonia, Catalan literature became quite closely synchronized with the movements in the remainder of Europe.[374] The year 1912 is generally accepted as the date at which the Avant-garde movements were first formally introduced into Catalonia via the plastic arts with Josep Dalmau's exposition of Cubist paintings by such artists as Duchamp, Juan Gris, Léger, and Gleizes,[375] Dalmau was also instrumental in organizing several other important exhibitions in the proceeding decade where works by Braque, Derain, Matisse and Vlaminck were shown. In addition, he patronized the first presentations of Joan Miro's and Salvador Dalí's paintings, and in 1922 he arranged for a collection of Picabia's works to be brought to Barcelona where they were shown. The accompanying catalogue text was written by André Breton himself. The last exposition came several years after Dalmau began publishing the review *391*[376] on which such well-known writers as Apollinaire and Max Jacob collaborated. Interestingly enough, this particular review was written exclusively in French which gives some indication of the extent to which France influenced and was influenced by the Catalan artists.

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[374] Miquel Arimany, L'Avantguardisme en la poesia catalana actuel (Barcelona: Editorial Portic, 1972), p. 29.

[375] Juan Fuster, Literatura catalana (Madrid: Editoria Nacional, 1975), p. 198.

There were a number of other important reviews as, for example, *Trossos* and *L'Amic de les arts* which drew contributions from aspiring poets, including one of the leading figures in modern Catalan letters, the poet Josep Viceŋ Foix.

The majority of Foix's creative works have been collected into a relatively small number of books, the best known of these being *Gertrudis* (1927), *Les Irreals Omegues* (1949), *On He Deixat les Claus* (1953), *Diari 1918* (1956), and *Onze Nadals i un cap d'any* (1960).

Throughout the twentieth century Foix has been connected with virtually every important literary development in Catalonia, particularly those asssociated with the Avant-garde. The well-known critic and historian Joan Fuster commented that, "Desde luego no hay revista del ramo ni actividad removedora en el campo de las artes y las letras catalanas durante medio siglo que no tengan Foix como colabrador resuelto."[377] Unlike many of the poets who became famous during the experimental twenties, Foix is as well loved today as he was fifty years ago,[378] and he is considered to be one of the most interesting and influential writers of his time. However, this is not to say that he has an inordinately large reading public, for with the exception of his Christmas carols much of his writing has been subject to accusations of hermeticism and elitism.

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[376] Fuster, *Literatura*, p. 199.

[377] Joan Fuster, *Literatura catalana* (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1975), p. 205.

The imagery contained within the five collections from 1927-60 I have listed above encompasses a truly incredible range of styles and techniques reflecting Foix's knowledge of and interest not only in modern experiments, but also in more established modes of literary practice. The initial problem posed by the complexity of his imagery and his tendency towards experimentation has often lead critics to label him as a surrealist and even to dismiss him as such.[379] Recognizing the difficulties inherent in reading so complex a poet, Gabriel Ferrater has remarked that, " . . . si Foix no ha estat classificable, ni tan sols amb la fàcil i prodigada classificació generacional, és en part, però només en part, una conseqüència d'haver estat poc i mal llegit."[380] In the prologue to Els lloms transparents, Ferrater also noted that Foix "va passar molt de temps amagat. No precisament ignorat, però encobert sota la noció de 'surrealisme'."[381] The problem of classifying the poet has led another critic to speculate that:

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[378] Patricia Boehne, J.V. Foix (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980), p. 136.

[379] Albert Manent, "J.V. Foix Té Vuitanta Anys," Serra D'Or, Vol. 15 (January 1973), p. 25.

[380] Gabriel Ferrater, quoted by Joan Triadú, "J.V. Foix en la situació de la poesia catalana," Serra d'Or, Vol. 15 (January 1973), p. 29.

> Si un poeta hi ha en la poesia catalana que no es deixa classificar, que cap escola no el pot encabir, és J.V. Foix. I tanmateix, la imatge que en té el lector bé que rica i complexa, no és pas confusa. La impossibilitat o la gran dificultat de classificació cal cercar-la, doncs, per un altre costat. Potser en la singularització i el desbordament que el caracteritzen, i sobretot, en el fet que davant d'ell se'ns planteja el problema de *qué* escriu més (o abans) que no pas el de *com* escriu.[382]

Arthur Terry has also commented on the effort required on the part of the reader stating:

> El que li costa al lector, en canví, és d'entendre l'esforç mental i l'agilitat imaginativa amb els qual tota influència esta incorporada a la visió d'un món que per al poeta constitueix l'única realitat possible . . . S'ha dit, amb molta justícia, que tot poeta important es veu en la necessitat de crear-se, ell mateix, un públic capaç de llegir-lo; en el cas de Foix, hom pot témer que aquest públic encara sigui molt restringit . . .[383]

The classification of Foix's imagery is clearly a highly contentious issue and critical opinions are sometimes diametrically opposed. While some critics contend that by using surreal techniques Foix completely transforms reality,[384] others argue that the problem in comprehending Foix's poetry is based on the fact that he is too realistic and that his imagery is knit from specific episodes, news, and events.[345] One critic, Miquel Arimany, who belongs in the first camp, wrote that, "J.V. Foix també és plenament avant-guardista--si avant-guardista li diem, car les seves tendències tant com amb les avant-guardistes pròpiament dites coincideixen, i potser més i tot, amb les sobrerealistes."[346] Indeed, Arimany also suggests that Foix "s'anticipa a l'aparició d'aquest moviment [Surrealism] poètic en el món."[347] Joan Fuster would seem to concur with this opinion saying:

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[381] Gabriel Ferrater, quoted by Albert Manent in "J.V. Foix Té Vuitanta Anys," *Serra d'Or*, Vol. 15 (January 1973), p. 25.

[382] Joan Triadú, "J.V. Foix," *Serra d'Or*, Vol. 15 (January 1973), p. 29.

[383] Arthur Terry, *Sobre les obres poètiques de J.V. Foix,"* *Serra d'Or*, Vol. 10 (March 1968), p. 47.

[384] Antonio Comas, *Ensayos sobre literatura catalana* (Barcelona: Editorial Taber, 1968), p. 266.

> Queda hecha y repetida la referencia del surrealismo para clasificar la lírica de Foix. Hemos precisado, además, que se trataba de un surrealismo avant la lettre, porque, cronológicamente, los primeros ensayos de Foix en esta dirección anteceden el programa de André Breton y la vigencia de la nomenclatura.[348]

Guiseppe E. Sansone also noted the possibility that Foix discovered surreal imagery before Breton:

> Guiseppe E. Sansone ha assenyalat que les primeres poesies surrealistes de Foix daten del 1918 i, per tant, són anteriors a les formulacions d'aquest moviment que, després d'unes temptatives prèvies, es concreten en el famós manifest del 1925. No podríem doncs, parlar d'influències, sinó més aviat de coincidències, cosa que no ens pot estranyar, perquè ja és sabut que qualsevol corrent literari o artístic irromp simultàniament en els cors millors d'una època, com obeint a una necessitat d'expressió

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[345] Comas, Ensayos, p. 267.

[346] Miquel Arimany, L'Avantguardisme en la poesia catalana actual (Barcelona: Editorial Portic, 1972), pp. 31-32.

[347] Arimany, L'Avantguardisme, p. 29.

[348] Fuster, Literatura, p. 206.

> que exigeix per al vi nou un bot nou.[389]

The first question we should address is from what basis did these critical judgements arise? The answer may well lie in the theoretical similarities between Foix's and Breton's thoughts, rather than in the similarities between the texts. There are four major points of convergence between Foix's and the doctrinaire surrealists' beliefs. Foix, like the surrealists, is interested in the marvelous, and he too "se entrega a la manipulación de sus destilaciones maravillosas."[390] Foix shares Breton's belief in the importance of *le hazard* and elevates chance to the level of a poetic creed.[391] The Catalan poet also professes to have faith in the validity of dream perception and once wrote that "Es quan dormo que hi veig clar."[392] Finally, and most importantly Foix shares the surrealist belief that that is not a contradiction between the real and the unreal:

> Recorda sempre que sóc un testimoni del que conto, i que el real, del qual parteixo i del qual visc, amb cremors a les entranyes, com saps, i l'irreal que tu et penses descobrir-hi, són el mateix.[393]

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[389] Guiseppe E. Sansone, quoted by Juan Teixidor in "Quatre notes sobre la poesia de J.V. Foix," *Els Marges*, Vol. 2, No. 7. (June 1976), p. 8.

[390] Pablo Corbalan, *Poesia surrealista en España* (Madrid: Ediciones del Centro, 1974), p. 37.

[391] C.B. Morris, *Surrealism and Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1972), p. 53.

[392] J.V. Foix, *Obres completes* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1974), p. 247.

[393] J.V. Foix quoted by Joan Fuster in *Literatura catalana*, p. 207.

With such similar theoretical precepts, it is not surprising that Foix's imagery often appears to be related to surrealist imagery and that it is classified within this movement, especially in light of the fact that Foix himself has said that "Jo no nego d'haver participat a la liturgia superrealista. I per què no?"[314] However, he qualifies this admission adding:

> M'escau d'assajar diversos estils: ara no han reconegut els critics. Tu acabes de llegir-me una de les repostes a una enquesta d'en Badosa, de cap al 1960, el qual m'anomena "realista simbòlic i a qui confesso que puc tractar un mateix tema amb actitud clàssica, romàntica i superrealista. Hi ha poemes que s'elaboren en el subconscient i en rellegir-los el primer que en resta sorprès és el poeta. I ell sovint no pot explicar-se les troballes oniriques, donades sense esforç.[315]

Unfortunately, Foix's admission that he participated in Surrealism, combined with the often dream-like quality of his imagery, has prompted at least one critic to conclude that Foix belongs in the surrealist enclave and that "el somni, el subconscient és l'únic que compta. El resultat és, naturalment, un fuga de frases gairebé, incoherents."[316]

Part of the reason for statements like that made by Manent is, as Terry has pointed out, that interpreting Foix's imagery requires a great deal of intellectual effort on the part of the reader. However, the individual's inability or unwillingness to make this effort does not, in itself, justify labelling Foix as a surrealist. While Terry readily admits that, "Evidenment, una part de la intenció de l'autor consisteix a presentar una quantitat d'imatges que no admeten una interpretació estrictament racional,"[397] in defense of Foix, he also emphasizes the fact that, "Si Foix sembla aproximar-se de vegades a certes tècniques surrealistes per exemple a l'escriptura automàtica cal tenir en compte que per a ell el poeta resta sempre el mag, l'especulador que es reserva el poder de manipular els elements de la seva visió."[398]

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[314] J.V. Foix, quoted by Albert Manent in "J.V. Foix," Serra d'Or, Vol. 15 (January 1973), p. 25.

[315] J.V. Foix, quoted by Albert Manent in "J.V. Foix," Serra d'Or, Vol. 15 (January 1973), p. 25.

[316] Albert Manent, "J.V. Foix," Serra d'Or, Vol. 15 (January 1973), p. 25.

This comment would appear to be in accord with both Foix's own adamant assertions that he does not belong to either the surrealist group or the Avant-garde.[399] One of Foix's best known lines "M'exalta el nou i m'enamora el vell" offers a fairly comprehensive idea of his general philosophy. Yet, in order to understand this statement, the reader must realize that Foix's conception of the new differs sharply from that of many other writers, and unlike his contemporary Carles Riba, he completely rejects the symbolist tradition. Instead he chose to become what he called in his own words "un investigador en poesia." He considers his images to be "l'objectivació literària dels meus estats psiquics."[400]

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[397] Arthur Terry, "La Idea de l'ordre en la poesia de J.V. Foix," Serra d'Or, Vol. 10 (January 1973), p. 42.

[398] Terry, "Sobre les obres," Serra d'Or, Vol 10 (March 1968), p. 48.

[399] Corbalan, Poesia, p. 31.

In order to facilitate later discussions centering on whether or not Foix's imagery can be classified as surrealist according to the criteria presented earlier, I wish now to present a brief summary of the critical work done to date on his imagery, specifically his methods and their effect upon the reader. Most critics who have studied in-depth the whole of Foix's poetic output are in agreement that, above all else, his poetic world is built upon a series of transformations and the repetitions of transformations. Arthur Terry commented on this aspect of Foix's poetry:

> Moltes vegades, aquestes transformacions s'efectuen per mitjà d'un procés que en podríem dir escenogràfic, segons el qual el poeta sembla combinar els elements d'un paisatge només per substituir-los per uns altres.[401]

Teixidor also notes the idea of reoccurrence in his works adding that, "Temes, obsessions, imatges, noms i tot, s'anirant repetint indefinidament."[402] Terry believes that this repetition is largely a result of Foix's own belief in a cosmic vision: "Ací, el més característic de Foix és la visió còsmica que determina fins i tot els elements aparentment més trivials de la seva poesia."[403] Naturally, the cosmic vision implies a feeling of unity and Foix's unusual juxtapositions are explained accordingly:

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[400] J.V. Foix, quoted by Joan Triadú in "J.V. Foix," Serra d'Or, Vol. 15 (January 1973), p. 29.

[401] Arthur Terry, "Sobre les obres," Serra d'Or, 1968, p. 49.

[402] Teixidor, "Quatre notes sobre," Els Marges, Vol. 2, No. 7 (June 1976), p. 7.

[403] Terry, "Sobre les obres," Serra d'Or, Vol. 10 (March

> No es tracta pas d'unes combinacions arbitràries, sinó de les pregones disposicions mentals del poeta, que s'ho mira tot sota el signe de la unitat.[404]

Even when Foix does employ hermetic imagery, Terry argues that " . . . per al lector que sàpiga situar-se en aquest procés, la poesia de Foix, sense deixar d'esser dificil, poques vegades resulta hermètica."[405] He further suggests that there are certain imatges-clau which one can trace throughout Foix's poetry and which "tornen a repetir-se, sota unes formes moltes diverses, pero sempre al nivelle de la faula inventada."[406] Terry discusses Foix's technique:

> El seu mètode consisteix a projectar-se en un nombre d'accions que, per fantàstiques que semblin a primera vista, sempre depenen d'unes associacions que, tot partint de la ment del poeta mateix, són al mateix temps la verificació d'uns processos que altrament haurien quedat a l'inconscient.[407]

While the technique itself does appear to be very similar to that used by the surrealist group, the reader must remember that "el poeta es reserva el poder de controlar els elements de la seva visió, que vénen a presentar-se com a imatges de

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[403](cont'd) 1968), p. 50.

[404] Terry, "Sobre les obres," Serra d'Or, Vol. 10 (March 1968), p. 50.

[405] Terry, "Sobres les obres," Serra d'Or, Vol. 10 (March 1968), p. 50.

[406] Terry, "Sobres les obres," Serra d'Or, Vol. 10 (March 1968), p. 50.

[407] Terry, "La idea," Serra d'Or Vol 15 (January 1973), p. 42

la seva pròpia vida mental."[408] Stated succinctly, there is an overall sense of total order found in Foix's poetry, which regardless of whether or not the images were born "spontaneously" from the unconscious or right hemisphere, allows the reader to comprehend as well as to experience the message imbedded in the imagery. However, one should note that comprehension in this sense is not at all the same as analysis wherein rational mind processes take precedence over holistic ones. Many of Foix's images "no exigeixen la nostra comprensió tant com una mena d'adhesió interior que ens fa conscients d'una certa qualitat inevitable, impossible d'analitzar en termes racionals."[409] Nonetheless, when images of this type do occur they are still situated within a larger body of images which can be analyzed rationally through the employment of these image keys. Thus, according to Terry, "Per a qui sàpiga entendre la visió essencial de Foix, aquesta arbitrarietat poques vegades arriba a afectura el cos del poema."[410] If Foix's poetry can, indeed, be comprehended through the analytic processes of the left-hemisphere, the reader is left wondering why critics have published anthologies wherein Foix's poetry appears labeled as "surreal" and more importantly why he is sometimes said to have anticipated the movement. The answer may well lie in Teixidor's statement that "Així, doncs, l'avantguardisme, i més concretament el surrealisme o un cert surrealisme, seria un del perns de la personalitat poètica de Foix i tantes altres màscares successives amb què s'embolcalla el seu estre no podrien desvirtuar-ho."[411]

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[408] Terry, "L'idea," *Serra d'Or*, Vol. 15 (January 1973), p. 42.

[409] Terry, "Sobre les obres," *Serra d'Or*, Vol. 10 (March 1968), p. 49.

[410] Terry, "Sobre les obres," *Serra d'Or*, Vol. 10 (March 1968), p. 51.

Let us now turn our attention towards a poem by Foix which has been included in an anthology of Surrealism in order to ascertain which elements in the imagery led to its inclusion in the text.

A L'ENTRADA D'UNA ESTACIO SUBTERRANIA, LLIGIT DE MANS I PEUS DUANERS BARBOSOS, VAIG VEURE COM LA MARTA SE N"ANAVA EN UN TREN FRONTERER. LI VOLIA SOMRIURE, PERO UN MILICIA POLICÈFAL SE ME'N VA ENDUR AMB ELS SEUS, I VA CALAR FOC AL BOSC

Escales de cristall a l'andana solar
on passen trens de llum cap a platges obertes
entre murs transparents i coralls sarmentosos
i ocelles d'ull clarós en brogiment de brancs.

Ets tu, blana en el blanc d'aquesta alba insular,
--líquid l'esguard, atenta a músiques innates-
que escrius adéus humits a la forest dels vidres,
amb semença de nit per a un somni desclòs?

Te'n vas enllà del goig, al ribatge endantat
Amb gegants embriacs a l'espluga gatosa
i falcons dissecats a les roques senyades,
a un par petjat pels déus en els nocturns furtius.

No puc heure't, dorment, orb de llum i de ment,
vestit com un infant, sense veu ni bagatge,
entre tràmecs guardat per hostalers biformes;
els passaports són vells i sangosos els cors.

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[411] Teixidor, "Quatre notes," Els Marges, Vol. 2, No. 7 (June 1976), p. 9.

T'emportes puigs i rius, i els estanys estel.lars
i fonts en bacs gelius en profundes valises;
un guaita tenebrós, des del serrat en flames,
em crida amb noms estranys i em fa que no amb les mans.

Onegen foramur banderes esquinçades.[412]

I wish now to present three different explications of the poem in order to make the possible relationships between Foix's imagery and the standard notion of surreal imagery more apparent.

Starting from the first stanza we have highly visual imagery. The emphasis on visualization is not surprising, since from the advent of *Noucentisme* in Catalonia, the idea of reality being determined by perception was of major importance to a number of poets and painters including J.F. Foix and Salvador Dalí.[413] The language communicates figuratively and the imagery must be decoded inferentially. The reader can, with little difficulty form a visualization of a semi-deserted railroad station close to the sea or the ocean where only the birds are waking. The walls could refer to the still slightly present darkness which could be considered either penetrable or transparent. Since the images written by the poet are seen in darkness at night, the suggestion could be offered that his perception is conditioned and, indeed, altered by the lack of available light.

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[412] J.V. Foix, *Obres completes* (Sept. 1936; rpt., Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1974), p. 241.

[413] Corbalán, *Poesia*, pp. 37-38.

The second stanza seems to indicate that the poet is watching the departure of someone of whom he is fond. The image "--líquid l'esguard" could apply to eyes filled with tears as could the other image in this stanza "adéus humits." Since tears tend to produce visual disturbances, one finds that the poet may again be experiencing a mode of perception different from the norm. This perceptual change could also account for the image "a la forest dels vidres" since the poet could see the train's windows as a forest due to blurred vision and poor light. The image "amb semença de nit per a un somni desclòs" obviously relies less on altered perceptual modalities. Rather, I would suggest that it forms part of the imatges clau of which Terry speaks. Since dreams generally appear in a positive context in Foix's writings, and since the image of a seed implies the chance of a new beginning or a new life, a possible reading of the image is that it expresses the idea of other nights in times yet to come when a "dream" or a hope could be realized. The entire verse is written as a question as of the poet is not certain of the identity of the woman who is departing. This uncertainty contributes to the dream-like aura of the poem.

The third stanza reflects a movement away from the easily recognizable feeling of joy into a more mystical realism of the "encantada ribera." The mention of this shore signals a change in the perceptual mode of the poet and the landscape which he sees in his mind is transformed into "gegants embriacs a l'espluga gatosa." The following image, however, suggests a return to the more descriptive and analytical perceptual mode, perhaps resulting from a memory he has of a certain costal region. The last image of the stanza "a un mar petjat pels déus en els nocturns furtius" also seems to be related to a personal mythology and could be connected to the giants mentioned earlier. The imagery of these four lines suggests a voyage to a new location which has been transformed in the mind of the poet who, through emotional and sensory disturbances, is temporarily perceiving reality differently.

The first line of the next verse, "No puc heure't, dorment, orb de llum i de ment" is another which appears to be descriptive and reflects analytic thought processes, for when sleeping one is, indeed, blind to light and thought. The left hemisphere cannot control or perhaps even reach the perceptions experienced during the sleep state. In the second line the poet sees the woman "vestit com infant, sense veu ni bagatge" implying that she is simply dressed. Since she is already in the train and cannot speak with him, she is, for Foix, without a voice. The word bagatge is more problematic, for it could mean quite literally that she is travelling without luggage, or figuratively that she is leaving without any support or resources. However, the ambiguity would not seem to be related to the problems inherent in expressing altered perceptual modalities, but rather to the vagaries of language which may operate in either literal or figurative modes. The following image "entre tràmecs guardat per hostalers biformes" introduces another change in perceptual modalities, for here normal shapes alter and analytic processes cannot explain why the hoes should be guarded by bi-formed in-keepers. Even if the reader arrives at a satisfactory explication of the image, there is no way in which he can textually ascertain whether or not he has successfully chosen the associations which the author had in mind when he wrote tràmecs. The concluding line of the stanza indicates a return to the literal with the words "els passaports són vells i sangosos els cors." Undeniably, the reader encounters ambiguity since no-one knows why the passports are old, whose passports they are, whose hearts are bloody or why they are bloody. However, the ambiguity is caused by a lack of specific information and not by a change in perceptual modalities.

In the last stanza the woman appears to be taking with her much of what is pleasant in nature. The reference to profundes valises seems to refer figuratively to her mind, since only in memory could one carry mountains, rivers, etc. The poet, on the other hand, is left behind apparently in an unpleasant situation, most likely the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. The image "un guaita tenebrós, des del serrat en flames/em crida amb noms estranys i em fa que no amb les mans" suggest the cancellation of a furtive meeting.

The final image of the poem "Onegen foramur banderes esquinçades" offers a definite indication of destruction. While the image is a tragic one, there is again no indication of a change in perceptual modes, and no indication that Foix felt a need to deviate in any way from normative perceptual and linguistic frameworks.

This poem can also be interpreted in another manner, which although similar in some aspects, is more heavily dependent upon extended metaphors. Since this reading is quite a traditional one, I will present only an abridged explication.

The voyage and the person who is departing can be are related to the idea of death. This is to say that the woman, be she sister, mother, wife, or lover, has died and that the voyage which the poet refers to is the passage from life to death. In this case, the first stanza could be interpreted as the poet's view of her departure with the light imagery reflecting a positive view of the journey. The "platges obertes" could then refer to the unknown potential for life after death. In the second stanza the persona would appear to be questioning the reality of the death which he might be having difficulty accepting. However, the imagery is again fairly positive for it concludes with the idea of a "somni desclòs" which suggests the promise of positive events. The image also echos the idea of openness and spaciousness or freedom found in the first stanza with the reference to "platges obertes." The third stanza emphasizes both the idea of travel and of death with references to movement "Te'n vas enllà . . ." and ". . . un mar petjat pels déus en els nocturns furtius."

In the fourth stanza, he appears to have accepted the reality of her death with the line "No puc heure't, dorment, orb de llum i de ment," in which sleep is a metaphor for death. The following image "vestit com un infant, sense veu ni bagatge" implies a return to innocence and a disconnection with the material world.

There appears to be a break in the continuity of the poem with the image "entre tràmecs guardat per hostalers bi-formes," for if in this line the words are given their normal semantic values, they cannot be understood. There are two startling juxtapositions that should be noted. First of all, there is no apparent reason why hoes should be guarded by inn-keepers. Secondly, the inn-keepers are bi-formed which suggests a type of deformation or deviation from the normal. The sentence, while grammatically flawless is totally incomprehensible when read in the traditional fashion. It would seem then that the only possible way of attempting to comprehend the image is to accept that each word is, in itself, a multiple image and that each multiple image must be explored before it may be combined with others and then interpreted. In other words, the image must be read from the relational rather than the analytic, and from the multiple rather than the sequential perspectives. Since this process is the exact opposite of normative reading, this reading strategy actually involves an attempt to switch to right brain perception which is holistic rather than segmented. As we have seen, while decoding an image is normally a process of linguistic reduction, in imagery of this sort the decoding involves linguistic augmentation.

After this image, Foix closes the stanza with "els passaports són vells i sangosos els cors" the semantics of which signal a return to sequential imagery. The image, although cryptic, does not necessitate any change of perceptual processes, since old passports and bloody hearts can be understood analytically as symbols of death, sadness, disappointment, etc.

The first two lines of the next stanza, "T'emportes puigs i rius, i els estanys estellars/i fonts en bacs gelius en profundes valises" could be read as suggesting that the woman will carry pleasant memories of her life on earth with her. The last two lines "una guaita tenebrós, des del serrat en flames/em crida amb noms estranys i em fa que no amb les mans," suggests that he cannot follow the woman, and the implication of a growing feeling of alienation is found in the reference to the foreign or strange names.

The last image of the poem "Onegen foramur banderes esquinçades," implies an idea of departure combined with defeat. Tattered flags appear in this line to symbolize the end of something--in this case the ending of life with death.

The third possible examination of Foix's poem encourages the reader to perceive and appreciate the delicate intricacy of Foix's imagery. He is a highly visual poet who transforms the abstract symbols of language into highly concrete visual images, while at the same time managing to capture other associations--both the auditory and the sensory--of the symbols used as, for example, in the line "--líquid l'esguard, atenta a músiques innates." His juxtaposition of these symbols may startle the reader who is unfamiliar with his writing, since upon initial observation the images may appear to evidence semantic incompatibility and thus are considered to be incomprehensible.

However, the shock effect of such images is largely a result of Foix's tendency to alternate between two antagonistic perceptual modalities. The first mode--the analytic or left hemisphere dominant modality--is the one by which we understand analytically. There is a rational relationship betwen the image as he expresses it through language, and the world as it is perceived and understood by people in general. The governing logic behind images perceived by the left hemisphere, while not always readily apparent, can, with sufficient time and effort on the part of the reader, be brought to light through inferential processes. This has been the case with Arthur Terry who has managed to discern numerous image keys in Foix's work which allow him to understand the poetry more profoundly than the casual reader is able to do.

The first mode image (left hemisphere) predominates throughout Foix's poems, but it does not dominate them. On the contrary the images which seem to be a result of altered perceptual modalities take priority despite their relative scarcity, for these affect the reader's response to the entire poem and have led to Foix being blanketed by the label of surrealist. Images related to altered perceptual modalities are relational rather than segmented, which of course implies that they are grasped simultaneously and not successively, multiply, not sequentially. They could in these terms, be called holistic. Such images cannot be read and understood through left brain processes for these processes are based on left brain perception which is qualitatively different from right brain perception. Foix's apparent ability to alternate between these two mode gives his poetry a special oneiric aura. His poetic world is built on disconcerting, sometimes disturbing vision, where reality, unreality, the absurd and the tragic mix freely with one another. His writings have been compared with Giorgio di Chirico's painting, and the comparison seems to have some validity, since as Fuster says, in both cases, "objetos, paisajes y figuras de concisa definición, reales, sufren un rudo dépaysement, como en el sueño, para ordenarse en perspectivas y acontecimientos ya literalmente irreales."[414]

The constant movement within the poem from imagery describing the world as we normally perceive it to imagery derived from altered perceptual modes melds together to create the "dream-like" vision for which Foix is famous. The vacillating process of distancing and approaching the real and the irreal gives the impression of the wavering perception characteristic of the dream state.

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[414] Fuster, Literatura catalana, p. 208.

Left and right hemisphere dominant imagery types are found side by side in the poetry of J.V. Foix as we have seen in the poem from his collection Les Irreals Omegues, and such juxtaposition allows the reader to see more clearly the different perceptual modes involved in surreal and other imagery. Perhaps because Foix, like Lorca, and unlike the surrealists, was not intent upon proving that one mode was superior, but merely complementary to the other, his work provides the critic with the opportunity to compare and contrast the images with greater objectivity. His images show a continuum of expression from left dominant through to right dominant. Badosa noted this range of imagery types and commented that, "Gracias a este averroísmo literario, en Foix la imaginación es el resultado de dos fuerzas muy poderosas: inteligencia razonante y percepción analógica, una y otra concedidas con abundancia a este escritor."[415] While the leitmotiv in his works could well be "oposem cor i ment" and while Foix readily admits his interest in the surreal ideal of conciliation of opposites with the line "Si pogués accordar Raó i Follia," he is never willing to relinquish completely the rational, analytic processes which allow him to transform raw visualizations--perhaps first grasped through altered perceptual modes such as dream states--into delicately expressed poetic communications. In the opinion of Josep Castellet and Joaquim Molas, encountering Foix is a completely disorienting experience for the reader:

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[415] Enrique Badosa, Antología de J.V. Foix: Texto bilingüe (Barcelona: Plaza Janés, 1969), p. 13.

> Fins a un cert punt, Foix és un escriptor d'intenció realista que per insuficiència expressiva, ha de bastir un edifici retòric amb valor, ja per ell mateix--el poema--, on intervenen elements onírics i màgics, racionalistes i vidents, cultistes i populars, realistes; així entre la realitat inicialment contada i el poema s'obre un veritable abisme que desorienta completament el lector.[416]

The poetry of J.V. Foix shows us that surreal imagery is not always an attempt to alter radically the world by shattering the word. Rather, surreal imagery presents reality as it is perceived and processed through altered perceptual modalities, specifically those which are not dominated by left hemisphere activity.

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[416] Josep M. Castellet and Joaquim Molas Poesia catalan del segle XX (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1963), p. 91.

XI. Conclusion

The focus of this study has been on the different modes of perception associated with the two hemispheres of the human brain and the possible implications of these modes for differentiating the imagenic processes involved in the creation of poetic imagery. The analysis has drawn heavily from recent discoveries and hypotheses in the fields of neurology, psychology, and to some extent psycholinguistics. The historical survey analyzed images drawn from various movements while postulating potential links between hemispheric function and the resulting imagery with regard to both the creative and the receptive processes. The major goal of the enterprise was to attempt a de-psychoanalysis of criticism pertaining to surrealist imagery. Through the employment of neurological approaches, I endeavoured to demonstrate that surreal imagery need not, and indeed should not be read as an expression of the poet's subconscious (in the Freudian or Jungian sense), nor need it always be analyzed as evidence of the poet's unconscious fixations.

Yet, as I approach the conclusion of my discussion, I am forced to acknowledge the very hypothetical nature of much of the examination, for with all our knowledge we are still far from enjoying one hundred percent certainty regarding the functioning of the brain. Even leading scientists often admit the tenuous nature of their conclusions. I am also reminded of Anton Chekov's comments made almost a century ago about the possibility of someone undertaking such a study:

> No good will come of critics taking a scientific stance: they'll waste ten years, they'll write a lot of ballast and confuse the issue still further--and that's all they'll do. It is always good to think scientifically; the trouble is that thinking scientifically about art will inevitably end up by degenerating into a search for the "cells" or "centers" in charge of creative activity, whereupon some dull-witted German will agree, and a Russian will skim through an article on cells and dash off a study for the Northern Herald, and the Herald of Europe will take to analyzing the study, and for three years an epidemic of utter nonsense will hover in the Russian air, providing dullards with earnings and popularity and engendering nothing but irritation among intelligent people.[417]

Bearing in mind Chekov's pronounced skepticism regarding just the sort of approach that I have taken, I should now like to summarize and discuss the findings of this historical survey.

The study began with Lamartine whose images were found to communicate through the literal and figurative modes, and could be interpreted through contextual and inferential readings. Since his imagery reflected logically possible projections, and could be understood without going beyond the flexible boundaries of already established frameworks, it fell into the category of imagination imagery and was said to be left hemisphere dominant in both creation and reception.

Like Lamartine, Hugo communicated primarily through the literal and figurative language modalities in his writings, prompting the employment of contextual and inferential decoding processes in the reader. Consequently, his images were amenable to reading strategies controlled by analytical or logical thought patterns and were classified as imagination imagery. While understanding his poetry requires an expansion of the reader's expectational frameworks, the processes involved in the creation of reception of his texts appear to have been determined by left hemispheric functions.

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[417] Anton Chekov, Letters of Anton Chekov, ed. and trans. Simon Karlinsky (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 121-22.

The discussion on Nerval emphasized the idea of the hidden aspects in external reality which may occasionally be perceived by a poet and communicated through the poetic image. Not surprisingly, Nerval's interest in "hidden realities," attracted him to the perceptual experiences of the dream state. An analysis of his imagery which showed that his work could be interpreted through inferential reading processes led to the conclusion that Nerval never abandoned himself totally to the literal portrayal of imagery found in the dream state and that his work had a predominance of imagination images. A slight decrease in discursiveness was largely due to his symbolic use of figurative language which increased the possibility of ambiguity in the message transfer. However, despite this potential for ambiguity his imagery was still subject to sequential, analytic decoding thus indicating left hemisphere dominance in creation and reception.

Gustavo Adolfo Béquer's imagery showed a distinct reduction in discursive properties marked by subtle increase in non-sequential expression as, for example, with the unusual semantic joining of two substantives. Further, the spatial dislocation apparent in certain of his images indicated the presence of dream imagery. Yet, while the appearance of dream imagery suggests that Béquer's right hemisphere did play a part in the creative process, the fact that his poetry remains subject to decoding through inferential processes shows that the actual expression and reception of his imagery is governed by left hemisphere processes. In essence, because of the milieu in which the images are found, the reader is still directed to decode the imagery within the established frameworks. Since the majority of images can be decoded following normal patterns, the reader takes recourse to normative reading procedures and adapts the imagery to conform to his expectations.

In short, the images of the Romantic poets whose works were discussed can be comprehended within the reader's already established perceptual and linguistic frameworks. Because the images are in accord with logical or rational decoding processes directed by analytical and sequential thought, the creation and interpretation of the imagery was said to occur under the direction of the left hemisphere. The intent and effect of the images was carefully controlled by the poet, who could determine the reader's interpretation of the imagery. The reader is required to expand his frameworks, but not to construct new ones. We read Romantic imagery first conceptually (verbally) and then perceptually (visually); we develop an idea without ever having to develop a vision.

The brief examination of Baudelaire's poetic practice brought forward the expression of multiple, simultaneous sensory perceptions in the poetic image. While much critical judgement contends that in his work the idea always takes precedence over the visual (perceptual) content of the image, the argument was presented that Baudelaire's appreciation and experiences with altered perceptual modalities (e.g. hypnagogic, dream, childhood, and synaesthetic), also had a strong influence on his imagery. In essence, he may have expressed rationally (left hemisphere dominance) what he perceived irrationally (decreased left hemisphere dominance). Since Baudelaire communicated his perceptions through the figurative language modality, the poetic expression of his fantasy images can be decoded most satisfactorily through inferential readings which require an immense expansion, but not a total destruction and reconstruction of our established expectational frameworks. The conclusion may be drawn that the creative and receptive processes involved in Baudelairian poetics remain largely under the control of the left hemisphere's analytic and logical patterns, despite the contribution which I believe was made by natural or induced forms of left hemisphere reduction.

Altered perceptual modes were of paramount importance to Rimbaud as we saw both in his work "Le Bateau ivre," and in his own comments on voyance, for it was through these alterations that he envisioned the world from different, unexplored perspectives. Rimbaud's perceptions and his experiments with poetic expression of these perceptions led him further away from language as thought and towards language as image. In fact, he took us back, in a sense, to an earlier stage in the development of human communication to revitalize language, to make it once again convey direct perceptual experiences and not abstract or refined thought. Yet, Rimbaud's actual poetic expression of his altered--possibly eidetic perceptions--was adapted and communicated within the linguistic/semantic confines of an extended semantic framework. Moreover, images which are possibly a result of increased right hemisphere activity (visual images) are surrounded by images which can be interpreted through figurative reading processes. As a direct result of this embedding, even when the reader encounters "right hemisphere" dominant imagery in Rimbaud, he decodes it or attempts to decode it by expanding his established frameworks. Through the employment of inferential and verbal decoding processes the reader unintentionally negates the possible validy of the expression of altered perceptions and rearranges the visual perceptions to conform with verbal expectations or conceptions which are in accordance with sequential reasoning. After the "rewrite" is complete, the imagery can be classified and interpreted through normative inferential reading processes, and classified as fantasy imagery.

The examination of Mallarmé's poetic artistry took us in another direction. With Mallarmé abstract verbalization takes clear precedence over concrete visualization. In order to understand his imagery, the reader must carefully decode the images through intellectual means drawing heavily on his own past knowledge of myth and analogy. The abstract nature of many of Mallarmé's images indicates that he is communicating thoughts and/or emotions rather than perceptions. In other words, he is transferring carefully processed and developed ideas rather than immediate visualizations. He directs his readers through a complex maze of syntactical structures to arrive at an interpretation of his message. The confusion or ambiguity in his imagery is a result of a highly personal symbolism which converges on rather than diverges from his central preoccupations.

In short, Mallarmé's appreciation and use of language is both highly developed and highly personal. He has distilled from his perception of the world certain conceptualizations which he presents to his readers. While a variety of interpretations are possible in Mallarmé, the poet never ceases to guide his audience away from concrete reality and into the realm of considerations which his perception of reality leads him. The poet's syntax combined with the frequent appearance of abstract nouns indicates the necessity of high left hemispheric activity in both the creation and reception of his work. Only the left hemisphere can construct syntactical patterns and only this hemisphere can process abstractions. His fantasy images present not so much a visualization as a concretization of abstract formulations. More than painting a picture, Mallarmé is posing a question. The reader must first find the conceptual answers to the question before he can perceive and understand the visual form in which Mallarmé embodies his thought.

Futurism offered far more to literature through its theoretical treatises than through its creative texts. While the Futurists appreciated and were fully cognizant of the value of "liberated words," they failed to support their theory with practice. More than anything else the Futurists are, I believe, remembered for *parole in libertà*, *immaginazione senza fili*, and sound plays which attempted through onomatopeic processes to create new words. In fact, futurist texts are highly mimetic in nature: the major difference between them and other texts is that they imitated sound while other imagery often imitated vision. The major reason for their failure to realize theory in practice was their insistence that language or expression, not perception was circumscribing experience. The Futurists' intentional attempts to suppress syntax (which they believed was the root of all problems in poetic expression) necessitated the participation of the left hemisphere, particularily in the receptive process when the reader struggles to forge syntactical links between disparate words. Moreover, since the left hemisphere is responsible for ordering semantic units, one may assume that the decision to effect their displacement also involves the participation of this part of the brain. Therefore, the conclusion was drawn that futurist imagery was left hemisphere dominant in creation and that it engendered left hemisphere activity in the audience's receptive reading strategies.

The Dada years really set the stage for later literary endeavour. The Dadaists attempts to destroy the literary past combined with their penchant for spectacle offered rebellious poets and painters a congenial atmosphere in which to experiment with destruction. Essentially Dadaist writing is poetry à thèse. Its intent was to contradict everything--even itself; its effect was to disconcert, to disorient the reader. Dada imagery accomplished this through the disruption of syntactical flow, creation of semantic incompatibilities, and juxtaposition of these semantic fragments with logically constructed images, or with images which were amenable to logical interpretations.

The Dadaists believed that the language which was used to express perception was the ultimate barrier to mental freedom. They did not consider the possibility that restricted perceptual modalities themselves were at the root of the problem. As a result, the Dadaists experimented not so much with new ways of seeing, but rather with new ways of expressing (verbalizing) familiar perceptions. For this reason, experimentation with "pensée qui se fait dans la bouche," and "écriture automatique" were popular pastimes in the Dada enclave. The Dadaists used these techniques to exploit the factor of chance which they felt was an important palliative for the apparent stagnation of creative development. While it remains impossible to determine to what extent certain Dadaist images were a result of altered perceptual modalities, and reflect a decrease in left hemisphere dominance, we do know that the fractured syntax encourages the reader to initiate his own sequential linking processes which are dependent left hemisphere participation. Furthermore, the constant jumping from images which can be interpreted inferentially to images which require syntactic restructuring to images which are best read visually (perceptually) and not verbally (conceptually) encourages the reader to try to formulate links among the various images. Since these links cannot be formed visually largely because of the variety of imagery types, the reader searches for conceptual similarities, thus exciting left hemisphere activity.

The discussion involving André Breton's theories as expressed in his two manifestos drew parallels between his ideas regarding the functioning of mind and relatively recent discoveries on the different processing modes of the two cerebral hemispheres. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of the "visual" in Surrealism's poetic imagery. The reader was also asked to note that while automatic writing and word games are by far the most famous legacy bequeathed to us by the Surrealists, these techniques are not necessarily the most satisfactory for the poet in his quest to reach and mine the riches of the usually ignored and "mute" right hemisphere. Automatic writing still takes, as its point of departure, language experimentation and not perceptual exploration.

The dubious success which experiments involving automatic writing had in drawing upon the poet's right hemisphere was exemplified in Inez Hedge's study which showed that, when properly programmed, a computer with its micro-chips was equally as capable as a poet with his two hemispheres of "creating" or "simulating" surrealist imagery. Her study proved beyond any doubt that when dealing with surrealist imagery produced by automatic writing the question of intent becomes a totally mute point. Only the effect which the imagery has upon the reader can truly be examined. Therefore, the imagery must be judged according to whether or not it initially appeals to the reader's left (analytic) or right (holistic) hemisphere, or to a combination of the two.

The examination of imagery resulting from both uni-authored and co-authored automatic texts yielded surprising results. It showed that, contrary to expectations, many of the images could be decoded through inferential reading processes and did not require the destruction of established frameworks. Those images which could not be decoded through inferential reading strategies were amenable to either verbal associative processes which involved free association of semantic units, or visual readings which involved homospatial techniques. When the associative approach is taken, there are as many possible interpretations of the imagery as there are individuals who read the image. When the image is read visually, the range of interpretations is greatly reduced.

Automatic writing is probably the least right hemisphere dominant of all surrealist techniques simply because it relies on language first and perception second in the creative process itself. The decrease in normative semantic linking activity is due more to chance than to right hemisphere exploration. Automatic association of words or automatic writing is best understood as a uniquely spontaneous form of communication which may reveal the author's particular prediliction for certain colours, themes, concepts, etc. Since his associations are extremely personal, their effect on the reader is one of disorientation. The reader then takes recourse to non-normative reading strategies in an attempt to decode the message. During this procedure he may revert back to the original use of language and accept the word as visual image, rather than the word as conceptual transfer, or he may, during an associative reading process, actually discover previously unknown relationships between people, places, and things in the world around him.

The study on Spanish Surrealism which concentrated on Federico García Lorca involved the idea of perception being altered through emotional stress and the expression of these altered perceptual modalities in imagery. I also considered the possibility that when a poet attempts to express such perceptions within the confines imposed both by language itself and by a reader's established perceptual and conceptual frameworks, the result may be the negation of these perceptions. In other words, the imagery is read verbally and abstractly (or conceptually) before it is read visually and concretely (or perceptually). When, as in Lorca's case, the imagery can be satisfactorily decoded through either means, the visual is often disgarded in favour of the verbal because the verbal interpretations do not require acceptance of new frameworks, while the visual insist upon it. The altered perceptions which Lorca offers the reader do have the potential to stimulate new visualizations which combine disparated elements. However, the reader must be willing to suspend temporarily his dominant verbal capacity and to allow his right hemisphere the opportunity to participate in the reading process. The analytic hemisphere which insists upon re-ordering information to conform to the laws of the universe as we understand them must be forced to reduce its activity.

Whether Lorca's poetry is considered to be predominantly surrealist or not depends largely upon the individual's reaction to the imagery, the effect that the images have on him. The determining factor in such decisions may well be the reader's ability to accept, participate in, and experience the visualizations resulting from altered perceptual modalities. There is no definitive answer to the question of Lorca's "surreality," for the response lies in the grey area of individual reaction perhaps resulting from the reader's own cerebral activity and hemispheric interchange.

The examination of J.V. Foix's imagery introduced the possibility of surrealist imagery types existing before Surrealism's official birth. Since dream imagery was important to the French Surrealists and since it is one scientifically proven manifestation of altered perceptual modalities, the emphasis in this study was placed on the oneiric qualities apparent in Foix's texts. At the same time, however, the reader's attention was drawn to the fact that while the poet utilized images which are relational rather than segmented, and which must be understood simultaneously rather than sequentially, this type of imagery did not predominate in his work. In fact, Foix alternated effortlessly between left hemisphere dominant modalities and those which operate under the guidance of the right. The juxtaposition of these modes allowed the reader to observe more closely the different perceptual processes involved in surreal and other imagery.

A question which has haunted this critical study and the one which the examination of both Lorca and Foix brought to the fore is whether or not the surreal image is a new phenomenon discovered by André Breton or whether it has always existed, but has remained relatively hidden within the protective confines of more logical sequentially oriented imagery.

Essentially, I believe, the problem with defining the surreal image is that the difference between it and other types of imagery is a quantitative, not a qualitative one. Certain scientific studies have indicated that without the right hemisphere we are left with only the literal language modality. Therefore, we must assume that all creative writing partakes, to some extent, of right brain activity. The right hemisphere can connect, perceive and associate resemblances. As a word echos through it, this pattern-seeking hemisphere picks up rhythm, sound, visualization--whatever it perceives as related--even through the left brain may reject such data as extraneous or irrelevant. These facts suggest that the potential for the surreal image has always existed, since spontaneous ideas, dream imagery, hypnogogic and hypnapompic experiences have occured throughout history. Indeed, surreal perceptions may have been more common in the early stages of human development before rational thought began to govern and eventually supplant non-conformist perceptual experiences. However, prior to the surrealist movement illogical or irrational imagery only surfaced sporadically and because it was found in a text which could be interpreted within normative or extended normative frameworks, the reader had little difficulty adapting the image to fit into his existing perceptual or conceptual frames. On the rare occasions when irrational imagery did appear with more regularity as, for example, with Primitivism, it was equated with an earlier stage of human cultural development and was not recognized as being a vital component of current human creativity.

Ideally, the surreal image reflects the perceptual modalities of the visual, holistic right hemisphere, but since language is predominantly a function of the left hemisphere there is a constant conflict between perception and expression. Therefore, surreal images in all their manifestations have one thing in common. All must express and/or engender holistic perceptual experiences through the medium of language which by its very nature is segmented and sequential. The extent to which the presentation of altered perceptual experiences succeeds in interfering with the left brain tendency to demand conformity in perception and expression largely determines what I refer to as "surreality" in imagery. Images which require the critic to read visually or associatively, rather than verbally or conceptually, images which necessitate holistic rather than sequential processing are the images which belong within the unique perceptual experience known as surreal imagery.

Activation of the holistic right hemisphere which houses the processes that André Breton refered to as the "unconscious" offers new perceptions of the relationships among the elements in the world around us. Eventually, the right hemisphere may be encouraged to play a greater part not only in poetic practice, but also in daily perception and expression. As we learn more about the perceptual modes of the minor hemisphere, we may indeed learn more about the "hidden" realities which have fascinated poets and readers alike for so many centuries.

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Glossary of Terms

General

Unconscious: The part of the brain which is responsible for holistic or simultaneous processing of perception. The mode of cognition which is now associated with the right hemisphere.

Conscious: The part of the brain which governs analytic perceptive and cognitive processes. The "conscious" functions of the brain are located in the left hemisphere in approximately 98% of right-handed people and 67% of left-handed people.

Altered Perceptual Modalities: This term refers to perception which does not conform to rational expectations as determined by previous relational experiences. Altered Perceptual Modalities involve interference with left hemisphere control and occasionally a measurable decreased in its activity.

Language Components

Source Sign: Any sign which occurs in written or spoken communication. For example, in the sentence "The tree is green," the Source Signs are "The," "tree," "is," and "green."

Direct Derivatives: Any sign whose relationship to the Source Sign can be verified through analytic thought processes. For example, for the Source Sign "tree," some direct derivatives are "green," "bark," "leaf," and "wood."

Indirect Derivatives: Indirect Derivatives are formed from the Direct Derivatives of the Source Sign. Source Sign = tree --> Direct Derivatives = green, bark, leaf --> Indirect Derivatives = bark: wood, dog, growl.

Language: A communicative system--written or spoken--which conveys information through Signs, Direct Derivatives, and Indirect Derivatives.

Language Frameworks: The boundaries within which communications are transferred and comprehended. Language frameworks are flexible and their varying capacity for expansion depends upon the individual's semantic retrieval system. Most imagenic communications rely upon the reader's ability to extrapolate from established language frameworks. Since language skills are situated in the left hemisphere, the development and expansion of language frameworks are generally under the direction of this cerebral hemisphere.

Discursiveness: Discursiveness in language language frameworks in inversely proportional to the degree of ambiguity in communication. Discursivity in language is dependent upon the left hemisphere's ability to sequentially organize Signs, to retrieve semantically related information, and to abstract from this information. In imagenic communications, abstraction from information usually involves Direct Derivatives, and may occasionally necessitate the use of Indirect Derivatives.

Language Modalities in Communication: This term refers to the ability of language to communicate in different ways. In imagenic communications, language most often operates on a continuum involving literal, figurative and associative modalities.

Literal Modality: The literal modality is specific. Its function is to name or indicate an object, a concept, or a definable class of objects or concepts. This modality is directed by and responsive to left hemisphere perceptual and cognitive processes. Therefore, it fulfills analytic requirements.

Figurative Modality: When operating in this modality, language includes figures of speech and encompasses figurative meanings. Direct Derivatives are used to interpret figurative communications. Since these derivatives have a logically verifiable relationship to the Source Sign, language operating in the figurative modality is still under the guidance of the left hemisphere.

Associative Modality: Individual Source Signs in communications operating in the associative modality do not have a relationship which conforms to a reader's rational, established perceptive and cognitive expectations. Decoding of these communications involves either Indirect Derivatives or visualization (e.g. homospatial imagery). Associative communications may indicate a change in perception or conception at the point of origin, but they insist upon an alteration in normative perception and conception at the point of reception. Because of the required alterations, Associative communications are thought to induce a reduction in left hemisphere activity with a corresponding increase in the right hemisphere.

Reading Processes

Contextuality: This term refers to reading strategies which accept the conditioning of meaning through content and context. The meanings of words are determined by the meanings of the words which surround them. Contextual reading processes are initiated by language operating in the literal modality and are directed by the left hemisphere.

Inferentiality: This term refers to reading processes which involve the extrapolation of meaning. In addition to containing the relational information conveyed by the message, semantic memory in language frameworks also contains information which can logically be inferred. Inferential readings are prompted by language operating in the figurative mode and are controlled by the left hemisphere.

Visual/Perceptual: In these readings, the conceptual content of the message is subservient to the visual content. The reader perceives or visualizes an image which is totally compatible with current knowledge about phenomena. This reading process is instigated by language operating in the Associative modality. Since the concepts cannot be processed by the analytic left hemisphere, communications involving visual readings appeal to the holistic processes housed in the right hemisphere.